

# Senior Netizen

By Bob Osgoodby

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Senior usually has the connotation of the older, especially denoting the older of two persons having the same name, as father and son. It can also mean above others in rank or length of service. We however, have attached another meaning by adding the word citizen.

The term "senior citizen" has had an age attached to it. Usually at age 62 or 65 this title is bestowed, and some stores may provide discounts or other privileges when you have reached that magic number. AARP allows you to join at age 50. You can start collecting Social Security at 62, and many places have mandatory retirement at age 75. I find the term "senior citizen" however, somewhat demeaning. It somehow implies that someone is aged and infirm.

Don't get me wrong. Some of the benefits attached are worth the title. But most of the people I know in that age group, are not aged and infirm. Most are vibrant and alive, and after retiring from their "world of work" are ready for a new challenge. Some may continue as a consultant in their former line of work, others may choose something completely unrelated, or some may choose to do nothing at all.

Some may be fortunate enough to have the financial wherewithal to travel and visit exotic places. Others may take up a hobby. Those who choose nothing at all will most likely join the small percentage that are aged and infirm.

Today, our Seniors have an opportunity that previous generations did not. The wonderful world of the web provides something those who went before, didn't even dream about. It can range from something as simplistic as a hobby to an exciting business.

You can travel vicariously to any place in the world. We traveled to Spain a few years ago and believe it or not, I learned more about what we saw there when we returned home, and started researching things of interest we had seen on the web. If you're planning a trip, you can find places of interest to visit, make travel arrangements, rent a car, or find accommodations.

Are you a frustrated author? Why not consider writing as your hobby. You can submit your work to hundreds of online Ezines, or if you wish, start your own.

I know a chap who was always interested in post card collecting. Now he can not only pursue this

hobby, but has found many others online who have similar interests. They have developed quite a group of people who trade back and forth.

More than half of Americans over age 60 say that computers and the Internet are making life better for them. Now that many are retired, they have the time to spend that they may not have had when working. Many use the Internet simply to keep in touch with friends and relatives. Some, who live far apart, can actually shop online at a local store where their friend lives. It also gives the "snowbirds" an ideal way to keep in touch.

If you have always wanted your own business, but didn't have the capital to invest, the web might just provide that chance. For a modest investment you can start your own business, and possibly change that hobby into a money making proposition.

Like any business however, you must use "due diligence" before jumping in with both feet. There are a lot of get rich quick scams on the web, and many promise extraordinary earnings in a short time. Most of these, like the scam promising huge earnings if you help get millions of dollars out of an African country, should simply be trashed with a click of your delete key.

I know another person whose hobby is gardening. She grows herbs and markets several products online. She has found a niche business that pays, and is now in the process of putting up her own web site.

The ranks of the seniors are growing rapidly, and that fact is not being overlooked by business. Many companies are actively wooing this age group. So, if you are retired, or about to, use this wonderful tool to not only make your life richer, but help keep you young and vibrant.

It is never too early to get involved, or too late. If you're only using minimal features of your computer, why not expand your horizons? You may be surprised at what you find.

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