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ON THE AIR

Hosting a weekly radio show can be quite an adventure! Each week I welcome a new guest who shares with me and the listening audience stories and insights about themselves and what they are involved with that is educational, informative, interesting and oftentimes funny. The show is part of Allan Harrison's (a/k/a "The Voice of the Lakes Region") Lakes Region's Newsday program that airs each weekday morning on WEZS 1350 AM. Allan represents what might be the end of an era in radio! His show is the last of the locally produced information and news shows that the Lakes Region has. In an age where most of radio is of a 'pre-programmed' variety it is wonderful to still be able to hear the familiar voice each morning of someone from the area who knows the area. For many of us our daily morning routine isn't complete if we don't listen to Allan as we get ready for work or as we drive to work.

My guests represent a wonderful variety of people including many for whom this is their first experience with 'Live Radio'. We do the show live and unrehearsed because it keeps it fresh and exciting in a way that isn't quite the same if it were taped ahead of time. I always tell my new guests that they can do anything they want except to nod in response to a question. While nodding might work on TV – it doesn't play so well on radio!

My over two hundred guests have taught me quite a bit about older people, aging issues and the involvement of older people in the life of the Lakes Region Community. Not too many years ago we were all convinced that we were part of a youth dominated culture. Power, money and influence all went to the young! Not any more! Those young people have grown up and now it is really the group of people 55 and up who have taken center stage.

Older people are the backbone of our community and are involved at every level including holding elected political position as does Brenda Baer as City Councilor. I don't know how old Ms. Baer is, but I think that it is safe to say that she is older than the average bear.....and I am pretty sure she has an above average sense

of humor as well! Brenda knows that age only matters if you are a wine or a cheese.

Some people might be surprised to realize that older people are not just out there looking out for the needs of older people but that they are oftentimes the foremost advocates for young people. It is older people who often sit on the Boards of Directors of organizations that support many youth programs and it is oftentimes older people who contribute not just their time – but also their money to support youth centered program and causes.

I'm generalizing a bit – but older people seem to have a deeper understanding and appreciation of the cultural needs of a community than do younger friends. Older people seems to share a real mission to leave the community better than how they found it. We only need to look at the Laconia Library, Rotary & Stewart Parks as examples of where the leadership of 'mature' community members made all the difference and for that we have Bob Selig and Warren Clement to thank. The list of course goes on and on and on..... It is almost a certainty that if something important has been accomplished --- it has had the significant involvement of someone of retirement age! It used to be that if you wanted to get something done you gave it to a young person to do. Today just the opposite is true. If you need it done and done well – you need to be looking for someone with a little experience behind them.

The heart of the issue is that Aging Well is as much about attitude as it is anything else and what distinguishes those who are Aging Well is their vision of a future and their commitment to helping others. To Age Well we need to look ahead and not just behind and we need to look outside towards others and our community and not just inside to ourselves.

Who would of thought that hosting a radio show could teach me so much. If you have a story you would like to share on the radio --- just let me know. There is always more to learn!

Age Well!

*Howard Chandler has worked in elder services for over 35 years and is Vice-President of Meredith Bay Colony Club along with being a Partner of White Mountain Eldercare Solutions. Your comments are always appreciated.
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