

Retirement



Greg Francia/Staff photographer

Gary Stein helps Anne Diella from her home on Parkway, Rochester, to a St. Ann's Home bus March 17, to take her to Heart Adult Day Center at Sacred Heart Cathedral for social activity and crafts. Stein began working for the home after retiring from Kodak.

Retirees find enjoyment in work

By Lee Strong
Associate editor

Jim Aroune gets out to golf a few times a week.

Most people would likely agree that after working for decades in the moving industry, the 65-year-old Aroune deserves his time on the links.

But it was not enough for Aroune. "I have never been one to be idle," he declared.

So last fall when the position of pastoral minister opened at St. Joseph's Church, Rush, he jumped at the opportunity. Now he visits the sick, coordinates the parish lectors and Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults program, leads Communion services and trains altar servers.

He sees parallels between his work at the parish and his previous work in the moving industry — where he was involved in everything from management to actually helping move individuals and companies.

"I had dealt with people," he explained. "I understand service — I've been doing that all my life."

Besides, he added, "It's something I thought would be a wonderful way to spend the rest of my life."

Aroune is not the only retiree to return to work, according to Carol Sims, director of employment services at LIFESPAN.

No hard statistics exist as to how many retirees return to work — the Department



of Labor lists people by age, Sims explained — but she noted that studies indicate that the "over 55's (whether or not retired) will be the fastest growing segment of the work force in the next 30 years."

And Sims cited a 1992 Harris survey that indicated 37 percent of people over 55 who wanted to return to work were motivated by financial reasons, 21 percent were bored with retirement, and 14 percent wanted something useful to do.

"People want to do something worthwhile and productive, and they feel much better about themselves if they're doing something," Sims commented. "People are looking as they get older for something that has meaning to the world in general."

Take Gary Stein, for instance. The parishioner at St. Thomas the Apostle Church, Irondequoit, retired from Eastman Kodak Company in 1992 after 27 years in financial services. He decided to take advantage of the retirement package the company was offering because he saw that future staff cuts were in the works.

"They made me an offer I couldn't refuse," the 55-year-old joked.

But, he added, "I was not ready to retire." So shortly after leaving Kodak, he saw a newspaper ad for a van driver for St. Ann's Home/The Heritage/Chapel Oaks in Irondequoit. He went, applied, and was hired the same day.

Each day now, he transports residents of the health-care and retirement community to programs, or out to shop or eat.

"I love it," he declared. "This job gives me an opportunity to give back to people who may not have been as fortunate as I had been in my life."

Don Lawler, meanwhile, is using his retirement job to come at situations he'd dealt with in his working life, but from a different angle.

He retired last October after 34 years with the Cayuga County Department of So-

cial Services, most recently serving as the supervisor of Child Protective Services.

His initial plans were to teach at Cayuga County Community College, and to spend more time with his mother, who was having medical problems.

Then one day in February, the 61-year-old was working out with a fellow Sacred Heart parishioner. The parishioner asked if Lawler knew of anyone with a master's of social work because Catholic Charities of the Finger Lakes was looking for someone to head its Cayuga County office. Lawler, who possesses an MSW, inquired and was hired as the coordinator effective March 3.

In his previous job with the county, Lawler said that he was called upon to react to problems. In his new job, though, "we're going to be more proactive. We're going to look at the community and see where there are needs."

He said his new job enables him to maintain a relationship with many of his contacts in the community — while still giving him the flexibility to help his mother.

"It was a very special opportunity," Lawler remarked.

Meanwhile, Marnee Slate McLean is in the process of creating her own opportunity.

The parishioner at Corpus Christi Church, Rochester, retired in 1997 after 30 years as a nurse with the Veteran's Administration, most recently serving as the chief nurse at the Veteran's Administration Medical Center in Canandaigua.

Initially, the 54-year-old had planned just to take some theology courses at St. Bernard's Institute, but then she developed a more ambitious plan.

"Actually, what I'm really doing is trying to design a role for a registered nurse and a chaplain combined," she said. "I got the idea from people who talked to me saying they wished they had somebody like that when they came home (from the hospital)."

"The more I got into it, the more I saw there was a need to minister to people in a way that was not strictly medical and not strictly spiritual," she added.

So McLean entered the clinical pastoral education program at Strong Memorial Hospital, working with the chaplain's office there. She completed the program in December. She also began to work with the Visiting Nurse Service to gain practical experience of providing home nursing care.

Meanwhile, she has spoken with officials in Nazareth College's nursing department about earning a master's degree in geriatric nursing, and developing a research project to study the effects of the combined nursing/spiritual approach she envisioned.

McLean acknowledged that she had no financial need to work.

"I know people think I'm crazy," she said. "I'm 54. I have a nice retirement and I should be just enjoying myself. But I am. I enjoy what I'm doing."

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