

50+Living our best lives now and in the future!

“Life Runs on Fast Legs”

(Source Unknown)

Greg Henderson has not taken his life for granted. “I try to do my best to keep living life as a gift.” He is a husband to Dede, his “rock” and wife of 55 years, a father and grandfather, a proud University of Oregon graduate (as is his son), an Airforce veteran, a former bank executive, a writer, a volunteer, the founder of the Southern Oregon Business Journal, and a life-long runner. Remarkably, he has also learned how to stay calm regardless of how fast-paced life can become.



A Different Time and Reality: The Late 1960s

Henderson was a student at Lane Community College in Eugene when he met Dede in 1968. A year later, in 1969, they were married “without much of a clue as to how we would build careers and a family.”

The same year the Hendersons were married, the U.S. Selective Service “conducted lotteries to determine the order of call to military service in the Vietnam War.” While Greg was not called to serve, he knew of others who “had either died in battle or were injured.”

In 1970, Henderson transferred to the University of Oregon. “Student sit-down strikes and marches were commonplace at the college in those years, but violence was rare.” Henderson had no time for protests. As a full-time, married student, Greg also needed to work the night shift at a local plywood mill. Dede worked in an office until it became evident in early 1971 that she was expecting. During that period, businesses could get away with discriminating against pregnant women. Dede was fired a few months before their first child, a son, was born.

A Career on Hold While Serving in the Air Force

After graduating from the U of O, Henderson started a position in collections at Public Finance Company. He “learned about financial statements, contracts, and interest rate regulations.” Yet, in the back of his mind, he continued to think about those who had sacrificed so much in Vietnam.



In 1973, with his wife’s support, Henderson committed to a six-year enlistment in the Air Force. “Dede and I grew up a lot in those six years,” as they managed their family responsibilities and were stationed in some remote places, including Kotzebue, Alaska, and the Australian Outback. In Kotzebue, the temperatures could dip to -50F in the

winter; it was considered barbeque weather when the temperature rose to -10F.

A couple of years after joining the military, the Hendersons welcomed a daughter into their family. Then, they were off to Australia, where Greg was stationed at a top-secret satellite tracking station.

A Fast-Paced Growth Opportunity

After completing his military service, Henderson began working in the credit department for First Farwest in Eugene, Oregon, and was transferred to Portland, Oregon. He gained “extensive training and experience,” which led to higher positions and more responsibility, including executive leadership, and serving on the legislative committee of the International Consumer Credit Association in Washington, D.C.

Continuing Education

During his years of leadership in banking, he also expanded his knowledge of different industries and further developed his communication skills. Henderson served on numerous committees and boards and became active in Toastmasters International. As his presentation skills grew, he was “invited as a keynote speaker on many occasions.”

A New Direction

Henderson’s career eventually led him to Southern Oregon. However, by 2015, he was ready for a change. With a vast knowledge of various industries and their need for business-related information, he founded the *Southern Oregon Business Journal*. Then, after years of success, it was time to let go and sell his business to someone else.

Since selling his business, Henderson accepted an invitation to write a biography for an older couple. “Every life has a story that should be told.” In addition to writing, Greg invests his time in the community. He has helped people who want to

become business owners, has volunteered for numerous organizations, including CASA and



Rotary International, and has served as a member of several boards. He recently accepted a position on the board of directors for Aviva Health, an independent nonprofit organization. And, of course, Greg is

enjoying time with Dede, his children, and his granddaughter.

Health & Relaxation

Since childhood, Henderson has been a runner. His younger sister mastered speed crawling while he was still mastering the art of walking. “The story goes that she would catch and bite me while teething. Running may have been a way to survive.” Greg still runs today to “breathe with clear lungs and keep my heart strong.”



Henderson enjoys reading and finds “writing very relaxing.” He also practices remaining calm and relaxed, which he learned from his dad. “He taught me that important decisions can be made without losing control of your emotions.”

Advice

“I read a single-sentence description of life: ‘Life runs on fast legs.’ Isn’t that the truth? I don’t know how I got this old so fast, but I have. I try to do my best to keep living life as a gift. Laughter is critical, and friends are too. There’s probably someone you’ve been thinking of calling but haven’t...Don’t wait for them to call you; call them. Right now...It’s incredible how it will also improve your day and theirs.”

National Volunteer Month

April is National Volunteer Month. The official [government site](#) for volunteering states, “It is a time to celebrate and recognize the contributions of volunteers. It is an opportunity to join the impact of volunteerism and encourage more people to get involved in their communities. This is a great month to reaffirm your commitment to giving back.” If you want to know more about how to get involved in volunteer work, check out this [article](#).

Addressing the Crisis of Isolation in Communities

A 2023 [report](#) from the U.S. Office of the Surgeon General revealed that approximately one out of every two individuals (including young people) in our country experiences loneliness. According to the report, loneliness “is associated with a greater risk of cardiovascular disease, dementia, stroke, depression, anxiety, and premature death.” The report encourages all of us to do what we can to strengthen social ties in our communities.

With the associated mental and physical health problems, all of us must recognize the risk of social isolation and take steps to strengthen our community ties. Certainly, as individuals, all of us have the power to connect with people around us. Finding ways to serve others through some form of volunteerism is a great way to help the community and create connections. Checking on neighbors is another way to improve feelings of connection. Reaching out to younger people, many vulnerable to loneliness, can also help strengthen community ties.

In Pursuit of Happiness

Findings from a longitudinal [Harvard Study of Adult Development](#) on what makes us happy in life may surprise some people. Career success or winning the lottery are not the keys to happiness.

In a [2015 TED Talk](#), study director Robert Waldinger, MD, shared key findings of the 75-year Harvard study and revealed the *one thing* that makes us happy and helps us live longer.

In his Talk, “What Makes a Good Life: Lessons from the Longest Study on Happiness,” Dr. Waldinger summarized findings from the ongoing study: (1) People who are lonely and more isolated than they choose are less happy than those who are more connected, (2) Loneliness can lead to “health declines earlier in life,” including declining brain function, and (3) Individuals who are more socially connected to family, friends, and community are healthier and live longer than those who are “less well-connected.”

In a 2023 article for [CNBC](#), Dr. Waldinger and Marc Shultz, PhD, the associate director of the now 85-year study, elaborate on the social relationships we need for happiness. “Humans are social creatures. As individuals, we cannot provide everything we need for ourselves. We need others to interact with and to help us.”

The authors describe seven types of relational support, including having someone to turn to in moments of crisis, someone with whom you are emotionally close, and people who make you laugh.



Remembering Those Who Traveled the Trail or Who Blazed a Trail for Us



From the 1840s to the 1880s, 300,000-500,000 people [traveled the Oregon Trail](#) (up to a six-month journey) by wagon from Illinois. One of those people was [Abigail Scott Dunaway](#), who arrived in Oregon City in 1852 and later became Oregon's most famous suffragette. She was an author and published the *New Northwest*, a newspaper promoting women's equality.

Perhaps you have an ancestor who courageously traveled the trail and settled in Oregon. If not, someone who journeyed to Oregon may have helped create a better life for you. For Oregon women, Abigail Scott Dunaway's efforts helped pave the way to the ballot box; in 1912, women in the State won the right to vote.

If you want to honor someone past or present—a historical figure, someone who influenced you, a family member, or a loved one who has passed, the plaza above the Oregon City Elevator is being renovated and will include commemorative bricks now available for purchase. A 4" x 8" brick costs \$100, and an 8" x 8" brick costs \$300. For more information, click [here](#)

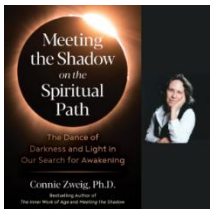
Free Webinars: Experts Share Enriching Learning Opportunities



Coming of Age, a national organization that helps people age 50+ “Live lives of passion and purpose,”

will be offering two different webinar sessions presented by experts who have been featured in the Boomer Best U Newsletter:

Connie Zweig, Ph.D., featured in the September



2021 [newsletter](#), is a retired therapist and author of *Meeting the Shadow on the Spiritual Path* and *The Inner Work of Age*. She will present “**Completing Spiritual**

Unfinished Business: Recovering from Religious Trauma and Easing Spiritual Suffering in Late Life” on April 17.

If religious leaders in our past abused their power sexually, financially, or emotionally, we feel betrayed, our innocence is lost, and our faith could be destroyed for decades. “But today, we have the tools of depth psychology and spiritual shadow-work to help us recover and rekindle the flame of longing in our souls.”

Based on the book *The Shadow on the Spiritual Path*, “this presentation explains why we are drawn

to charismatic leaders, what we unconsciously give away to them, and how to reclaim it for our treasury.”

When: April 17, 3-4:30 pm PDT or 6-7:30 EDT

Register: Click [here](#)

Benjamin James, CFA, CFP, featured in the July



2020 [newsletter](#), is the founder of Elevate Wealth Advisors and the author of *The Playbook: 7 Fundamentals of Financial Planning*. He will present “**Secure Your Future: A Four-Week Financial Planning Series for**

Older Adults” starting May 21.

“This clear and concise course will empower you to take charge of your future. Join James to learn how to set goals, understand your financial statements, navigate crucial estate documents, and optimize your insurance, taxes, and Social Security. Gain the confidence to make informed decisions and secure a worry-free retirement.”

Session 1: May 21 – Taking Charge: Understanding Your Goals & Objectives (1 Hour)

Session 2: May 28 – Build a Strong Foundation: Financial Statements Explained (1 Hour)

Session 3: June 4 – Protect Your Legacy: Essential Estate and Legal Documents (1 Hour)

Session 4: June 11 – Safeguarding Your Assets & Streamlining Taxes: Insurance, Social Security & Tax Strategies (1 Hour)

When: Beginning May 21, 4 pm PDT or 7 pm EDT

Register (Session One): Click [here](#)

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