

Trendwatcher

Celebrating 60 As The Start Of A New Chapter

(NAPSA)—Baby Boomers, a generation known for altering the definition of what it means to be an adult, are reaching and redefining 60.

After taking longer to grow up, have children and retire, this generation (born between 1946 and 1964) will fundamentally rethink what it means to be an older adult. Will it be more fun? More adventurous?

Celebrities turning 60 this year include Diane Keaton, Suzanne Somers, Donald Trump, Cher, Candice Bergen and Steven Spielberg and, according to Gail Sheehy, author of the best-selling book "Passages," the best may be yet to come. The future of this generation is likely to be full of some interesting surprises.

"This is a generation that has made a habit of reinventing themselves," says Sheehy, a contributing editor at Parade.

Sheehy says she enjoys the freedom of being in her 60s and feels driven to "put out the word that midlife today is a gift that keeps on giving." Earlier on in life people are bound by roles such as student, apprentice, spouse or parent. "But after 50, we can finally be truly ourselves."

What will Boomers make of life's next great challenge? For a start, most Boomers expect to continue working through their 60s and some into their 70s or beyond. This new expectation is fueled both by their desire to feel a continuing sense of purpose and social participation, and also because they must be prepared to support themselves for elongated later lives.



Photo credit: Granitz-Wireimage.com

Baby Boomers are finding ways to reinvent what it means to be 60 and older.

For some Boomers, these years are a chance to try entrepreneurship or apply their talents in the nonprofit world.

Many of today's women entering the next stage of life are more feisty than fearful. Workforce participation by older women has also increased dramatically with 70 percent of all women 50 to 59 working.

How would you describe people in their 60s to 80s who are still working, still physically active, and still open to adventure? The terms "senior citizen," "old" or even "retired" hardly seem appropriate, says Sheehy, who likes to call this the "Age of Mastery."

Parade, the Harvard School of Public Health and the MetLife Foundation invite readers to name and define this period of life. The best submissions may be featured in a future issue of Parade. To learn more and send your response, visit www.parade.com.