

Elder Lifestyle

Active, hip, trendy, competitive and fun loving. Believe it or not, this is not a description of the modern teenager, but the new social demographic of elder lifestyle. We see our generations as a decade younger than our parents did. This holds true for the elderly – 80 is the new 70, and 70 is the new 60. No longer is a senior defined as 40 to 60. They are 70 to 90. This is no better represented than the new stock photo collection Mark and Pat Hunt are launching at Huntstock.

When it's cold and wintery in New England, that's the time to take flight to Florida, where the crowds of elders are shopping, playing games, swimming, partying and pub hopping. Rested and relaxed in retirement, these smiling faces greet you sporting colorful sun hats and tropical jewelry, with the men in flowered shirts and baseball caps. The conversation no longer centers on the stresses of work or the vagaries of politics, but the activities of grandchildren and the strategies of gaming under the sun. In spite of walkers, canes or recent surgery, competition is fierce on the shuffleboard, bocce or tennis courts. A leisurely float in the pool also offers healthy and calming exercise for the mechanics of an older body.

Morning workout classes are an inspiration to behold. Folks who struggle with walking are still balancing to the beat of an exercise video. They are working the dumbbells in every direction to keep that blood flowing and the heart beating – “use it or lose it.” Valentine's Day serves as the perfect portrait setting to celebrate elder love and years of devotion. Couples that have been married for over 50 years, tell wedding stories as if they happened yesterday. Some display passionate kisses, and some sit six inches apart, shyly proclaiming the length of their relationship as if they stopped hugging 30 years ago. Others who lost a mate jokingly snuggle with each other as if to say – new romance is eternally possible.

This age group is the generation that has time to hold charity luncheons in the guise of promoting a good cause. The affairs look more like a lively chat fest and recipe sharing opportunity. The din of gossip and laughter is uplifting. These are the folks who are promoting the current economy – shopping at farmer's markets, and art shows, going to gift shops and clothing stores, relaxing at pubs and restaurants, and enjoying fishing trips and sight-seeing tours. This is the “happenin” generation. Huntstock is launching the start of this image collection at Getty Images, and will continue to enjoy keeping pace with this lively and social crowd of elder lifestyle.

Pat Hunt is a writer and workshop leader for the stock photo industry, and Managing Director of Huntstock.com in Boston, in partnership with Mark Hunt, Creative Director. Huntstock is a lifestyle image production company specializing in People with Disabilities, Hispanic Lifestyle, Industry/Technology and Boston Lifestyle. Mark has been featured in magazines for his iconic travel photography, and for the community being built around Positive Lifestyle with Disabilities.

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