

Booming into 2011

WHAT THIS GENERATION HAS TO SAY ABOUT THEIR FUTURE

By SHARON MACGREGOR

Celebrating a new year for some evokes images of noise makers and top hats, champagne, Baby New Year or Father Time with Auld Lang Syne playing and kissing at the stroke of midnight. Booming into 2011 are the members of the largest defined and most widely studied generation, the baby boomers. Many of the 78 million boomers will be turning 65 in 2011. We are a generation know for wanting to change the world. We've questioned authority and the values our parents held dear. Studies show that most boomers are in denial about aging—so the idea that many of us will soon be turning 65-is almost inconceivable!

Who we are

Celebrities born in 1946 include Cher, Donald Trump, Tommy Lee Jones and Sylvester Stallone. As a generation, surveys show that boomers are the healthiest and wealthiest, but have been reluctant to do much long term planning. While members of the so-called Generations X and Y may feel they are the voices of the future, many boomers are not ready to hand over the reins or go sit quietly on a rocking chair. As we begin the new year, *Hudson Valley Life* finds that local baby boomers are reflective about their coming of age at a time marked by anti-war protests and civil rights demonstrations. Many are especially concerned about their finances and some still want very much to change the world.

Baby Boomers speak up

65-year-old, Barbara Ashworth of Westbrookeville, has retirement on her mind. "I hope the economy in 2011 will take a turn so that I do not have to worry as much about retiring in a couple of years," she



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PETER HICKS, AGE 63
of Cuddebackville

says. "I worry all the time about money. I do not know if other boomers worry about retirement as much as I. Everything is so expensive now. I just hope I will be able to be secure in my golden years. I hope my husband, Rich and I will have the money to enjoy ourselves. The boomers have wonderful health care and so do I. I know I do not worry so much in those areas unless of course a catastrophic disease comes along."

63-year-old Margaret Sole of Middletown says she "can't wait to retire." Sole also hopes the economy improves while she and her husband continue to enjoy good health.

Peter Hicks, age 63 of

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Cuddebackville came to the United States in 1967, a 17 year old young man from England who wanted to start his own life. Hicks, who protested the Vietnam War in

Washington, DC, believes we need more unity. "Not enough people are banding together, when we have the power to make change," he says. For 2011 he would like to see more love in the world, and true peace on Earth, not just lip service. Peter specifically seeks good health for the New Year, since, "that is all you really need." With no plans of ever retiring, Hicks feels he needs to work for his own piece of mind.

Rosalinda Iacovitti, 58 of Walden has been on her own since age 18. She says she left home to find

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JULIE MURPHY, 56
of Bullville

"personal freedom." Iacovitti says when she was growing up, young women were expected to "speak like ladies," but now it seems that people can say just about anything. Iacovitti has high hopes about 2011. "Everyone's gotten so passive," she says. "I'm optimistic about the new year, because I've seen a resurgence of political and environmental activism."

Julie Murphy, 56 of Bullville, simply wishes for more civility and less consumerism in the New Year.

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In conclusion

In 1946 the first bikini was marketed, the first car phones were created, a new home cost about \$6,000 and the first Post-World War II baby boomers arrived. Memorable events in the our lives include the Vietnam War, the walk on the moon, Woodstock, the civil rights movement, the assassinations of JFK, Robert Kennedy and Martin Luther King Jr.

Music, especially rock and roll, became part of this generation's means of self-expression. We've grown-up to become a generation that's responsible for more than half of all consumer spending in this country Everything this generation does has been carefully documented. Boomers are the subject of a number of new books now on the market. What this generation does next will surely continue to be newsworthy.

Writer Sharon MacGregor lives in the Bloomingburg area with her husband and 2 sons.