

COLUMN

# Words of wisdom for returning snowbirds



Anne Palumbo

**S**nowbirds, can we talk? Now that the weather is warming up, many of you will be returning in droves (if you haven't already). You'll be tanned and rested, and full of care-free stories about walking here and golfing there and dining out nightly.

We Northerners who stayed put get it. You're happy. And you're especially happy now that

our weather is improving. It's why you snuck south, after all.

The problem is, we stay-putters are not feeling so jubilant these days. Much of our flinty resolve to embrace the winter has flown the frozen coop, so to speak, and we've had it up to our chapped lips with shoveling and layering and wiping our drippy noses.

We're grumpy, okay? Which means that, as much as we're excited about your return, we're not. Truth is, we're feeling a bit battered about and fragile, some of us hanging on by a thread. Whereas an April dusting of snow may be novel for you ("Honey, oh look! It's all fluffy and

sparkly!"), it's downright spirit-breaking for us ("Honey, oh \$#@! It's (sob) not (sob, sob) fair!").

All that being said, you returning snowbirds might want to take some precautions during your first encounters with family and friends to ensure a friendly visit.

You should begin by minimizing your healthy glow. Seriously, dust your skin with powder, wear colors that don't offset your radiance, cover yourself from head to toe — do whatever it takes to make us feel more comfortable in our own pasty skin. Understand that our bitter comments about too much sun exposure

are more rooted in envy than they are in sincere concern. Even though you may think it's funny, do not ask, "Has anyone ever mentioned you have the pallor of a corpse?" We've already heard it, several times over.

Next, do everything in your power to erase this sentence from your memory bank, "I never cooked, not once!" Yes, yes, of course you hit all the early-bird specials, night after night, and you had a heyday doing so. But we don't really want to hear about your blackened mahimahi or your pan-seared grouper or your conch fritters. Nor do we need details about

your impromptu cocktail parties with enough appetizers to tide you over till morning. Being tethered to our hot stoves all winter long has been hard enough; we can't bear to hear you never lifted a finger in your south-of-the-border kitchen.

By all means, suppress the urge to utter one more peep about the glorious weather you experienced: the brilliant sun, the silky breezes, the luxurious warmth, the wispy clouds. Listen, you tortured us enough over the winter with your daily weather updates, your blue sky background selfies and your crowd-gathering sunsets to

look for that mysterious green flash — so we're good. We don't need any more words about your precipitation-free winter that incredulously cured all your nagging ailments. Not one.

Snowbirds, take heart: our chilly stance won't last forever! With some sun and warmth, we promise we'll thaw and be more receptive to your southern stories. Just keep them under a minute and we'll be happy as a stuffed stone crab.

Anne Palumbo writes this column for Messenger Post newspapers. Her email is [avpalumbo@aol.com](mailto:avpalumbo@aol.com).

ESSAY

## 7 reasons to stay socially, physically active as you age

Episcopal SeniorLife Communities

**T**oday's seniors are living longer than ever. Why? Advances in medicine are making it easier for seniors to manage common chronic conditions like diabetes, hypertension and more. Plus, more and more, seniors over 60 are dedicating themselves to staying socially and physically active as they age.

Exploring new friendships, activities, hobbies

and maintaining a regular exercise schedule is key to healthy aging. In fact, studies show that doing so can help seniors live longer, more independent lives. Here are some of the key benefits of staying active as you age:

Protects from common illnesses. Studies show that seniors who are socially active also have healthier immune systems. As you age, maintaining a healthy immune system is key to fighting off common illnesses such as colds and

the flu, which in seniors can lead to serious complications such as the development of pneumonia.

Keeps your heart healthy. Regular activity can help seniors maintain a healthy body weight and improve circulation, decreasing your risk for high blood pressure and cardiovascular diseases.

Gives your mood a boost. Maintaining active friendships as you age, as well as regular exercise, can help ward off feelings of stress, anxiety

and depression. It can also ward off feelings of isolation, particularly in seniors who live alone.

Provides a sense of purpose. Regularly engaging in social and physical activities give seniors something to look forward to. Something as simple as challenging yourself to join a new senior-friendly exercise class, or master a new hobby can provide a sense of purpose and boost self-esteem.

Reduces risk of potentially dangerous falls. Moderate exercises such as walking, yoga, water aerobics and more can help seniors build muscle strength, improve

flexibility, promote better balance and increase overall mobility.

May help you live longer. Studies show that seniors who are regularly active may live up to five years longer than those who are sedentary. Additionally, staying social as you age may also increase overall lifespan according to researchers.

Decreases risk of cognitive decline. Numerous studies have shown a link between staying active and the reduced risk of cognitive decline, as well as a decrease in the development of Alzheimer's disease or other forms of dementia.

Episcopal SeniorLife

Communities offers a variety of ways for seniors to stay active, no matter their age.

Neighborhood programs offer exercise, fun and friendship to both ESLC residents and seniors living in the area. Each program is tailored to the desires of our members and helps seniors expand their social network through book clubs, nutrition classes and more, while also providing senior-friendly exercise programs to build strength, endurance and balance.

Learn more at [episcopalseniorlife.org](http://episcopalseniorlife.org) or by calling (585) 546-8400.

# PUBLIC AUCTION

By Monroe County