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The impact of the baby boom - society was never ready for us at any stage

Saturday, April 27, 2013

Certainly not when the first wave (born 1946-47) showed up for school.



I actually remember frantic adults at our local public school. They were trying to figure out what to do with the mob that showed up to register. It was suggested that if any of us were Catholic, we might want to go to St. Thomas Aquinas school a few blocks away. Many of us did.

There are 75 of us in this picture. According to the names on the back 10 kids were absent on picture day. There were only 66 seats (6 rows of 11), so some of us sat 2 to a seat. Those old bolted down desks weren't very big. Fortunately, neither were we. Childhood obesity was pretty much unknown.

This bulge moving through the population caused a housing boom as many families sought more space in the suburbs. We had split sessions in high schools, and created an explosion in college enrollment. We provided manpower for the draft, and participants for demonstrations. And we didn't trust anyone over 30.

Then we made it difficult for those following behind us in the job market. We got there first and we weren't going anywhere. Until now that is.

Here we come again – retirement – Medicare – Social Security. Unfortunately, society isn't any more ready for us now than that first day in 1952.

Our statistics don't look so good either. For a variety of reasons we aren't aging as well as our parents' generation.

I hope it's not too late to turn it around.

www.nbcnews.com/id/50698468/ns/health-health_care/

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I visited my old school last year during a visit to NYC. It's a public school now, leased from the diocese. The school security officer was very nice and let me walk around. There were about 25 children in my old room and it still looked quite crowded. Of course they had much more space to move around.

Obviously, I couldn't take pictures, but I did buy this shirt.



It reads "Brooklyn, only the strong survive."

Note: I'm the one with the big smile in the 2nd row from the right, 6th seat. I loved school.



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DESERTJULZ

What great memories! I came at the end of the baby boom... 1958. Barely qualify as a "boomer."

2969 days ago



CD8467616

I was born in 1945. I don't think we had that kind of crowding here in Southern California, though it was normal to have 35-40 kids in a class. Education here was very progressive in the early 50s. I think public education was at its peak here, actually.

2969 days ago



SOPHIEDO13

Loved your post....the government tries to jilt the last of us boomers I am a 60 one. they gave too many IOU's to SS and now want to make excuses for the shortfall that many of us will experience. I notice the music is changing in alot of the buildings to soft rock, and oldies I remember when I was young it was ballroom music I would hear in buildings LOL You look great !!

2969 days ago



CD12566888

I'm another '52 boomer, proud to have gone through the '70s with full flair. Now I'm trapped in the underfunded Illinois Teachers' Retirement System which makes me ineligible for Social Security even though I pay into the system (summer work, second jobs). Latest "escape plan" is to force retirees to "choose" between promised COLA and health insurance. Some "choice"!!! Just venting one more case where planners didn't plan on us Boomers...guess they thought we'd never



retire or they'd never have to fulfill their promises. Lack of adequate health care is a legitimate concern. Already warned my three kids that the one that treats me the worse now gets me when I can no longer live by myself. Thanks for a fresh take on a very obvious "future" problem.
2969 days ago



MSLZZY

Still a gorgeous smile!
2969 days ago



SUZYMOBILE

You haven't changed a bit! Guess I was lucky in my elementary school. It was a post-Civil War building, but we weren't nearly that crowded--though we're the same age.
2970 days ago



VONBLACKBIRD

I too am a baby boomer and will demand much better in a nursing home than my mother..I

want a swimming pool and gym and more fun things to do than bingo and basket making.
2970 days ago



DR1939

I was just before the baby boomers and my brother was just at the front edge. I do remember that he usually went to newly built schools whereas I attended the same ones my mother had attended.
2970 days ago



CD6416381

I was not in that first wave but I remember my cousins having the split sessions in school. As a nurse, I am concerned that we are not prepared for the amount of people who will need care. That is increasing every day. As someone not well prepared for retirement, I will probably work until they take my keys away (referring to keys we used to carry for the narcotics cabinet or to the exits in the mental health facilities!)

Thanks for sharing.
Susan



2970 days ago



BOOKAPHILE

We may have been unexpected at first, but the marketers have catered to us ever since - trying to sell us what they think we want.

You have the same sunny smile in both photos!
2970 days ago



MISCHAKEO

I love your t-shirt and your picture. You look wonderful. I am a boomer also. I cannot believe you had such a large class. I worry about what benefits they are going to take away from us boomers in terms of health care and social security in the coming years,

Hooray for Brooklyn!
2970 days ago



JAHINTZY

75 in one class! lots o kids! I was raised by boomers, so I like reading your stories about this kind of stuff :)

I find it curious to consider that the baby boomers were largely in charge of my school experience growing up - we had art on a cart because the art room was turned into another class room when they ran short on rooms (the area experienced an influx of people moving in, 5 new schools built in about 10 years) and we had trailers outside the building for extra class rooms too. The standards for our curriculum changed every couple years as they tested out new ideas. Kids a few years older than me and a few years younger than me learned completely different things, I'm still not sure what I missed between all the changes - I'm sure they had to have missed something, after all I repeated america revolutionary history 3 times. The differences between generations :)
2970 days ago



CD11948779

Wow! What a great photo and a great point.
2970 days ago



DOVESEYES

I'm a '59er' so not much chance of anything left for me and hubby as far as retirement or super we'll just have to keep going...:)
2970 days ago



**WILSONWR**

I'm a 1952 "boomer" and I tend to agree with the article. While we may be living longer, the quality of life isn't great for many. I'm glad we have sites like SparkPeople that help many of us to return to good health. You've done great! (And I love your smile, both in the early picture and now!)
2970 days ago

**DDOORN**

Demographically speaking, we are the "pig in the python" you can follow our impact on society as the baby boom aged and pushed resources to their limits but also pushed and expanded what was "expected" to be available to us. I think geriatric services will not only be pushed to their limits, but expectations of us boomers will be far different than earlier generations.

Don't show me to the rocking chair, thank you! :-)

Don

ps...a 1956-er
2970 days ago

**NELLJONES**

I was one of those kids, in elementary classes of nearly 40 kids. But we learned more in those big classes than kids do in smaller classes today. The first class of the day in high school was 7:35, without people bemoaning kids' needing later classes because of sleep deprivation. The curriculum was much tougher back then, I guess because they could sort out classes by performance without worrying about perceived discrimination.
2970 days ago

**COCK-ROBIN**

Wonderful!
2970 days ago

**EFFIEANNIE**

I am a 1946 boomer. My small school wasn't crowded in a small Illinois town. I liked your blog. I am glad I signed up for Social Security last year before it changes, I think.
2970 days ago

**WATERMELLEN**

And you still have that big smile (and of course are still very far from obese!)

Here in Canada, I'm seeing the step up of the "assisted suicide" debate -- with an overwhelming sea change in public opinion. Our Supreme Court held in 1995 it was contrary to the Criminal Code. Now it's pretty clear that baby boomers will demand the right to exit when they deem it to be time . . .
2970 days ago

**CD12313916**

Me too, 1963. I'd imagine that although the school was there and the class size was smaller, things definitely looked different.

I hope there's social security left by the time I get there.



2970 days ago

**EVIE4NOW**

A walk down memory lane for me. There were 2 classrooms in 8th grade at my Catholic school.. and 88 in my graduating class. The last class to graduate before the school closed a couple years ago was only 6 or 8 students. What a change.
2970 days ago

**RIDLEYRIDER**

My 2 older sisters and I are all baby boomers...these brought back memories of grade school. Thanks!
2970 days ago

**CD13167855**

Wonderful picture.
2970 days ago

**CD12146214**

I am the very last year of the baby boomers - 1963 !

I love your posts!
2970 days ago

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