



LAWRENCE S. WILLIAMS

Older ladies enjoy bowling on a raised miniature alley at a Salvation Army center in Philadelphia



LAWRENCE S. WILLIAMS

A Philadelphia art class: Ellen Ruby, Mrs. Joe Moorhead, teacher Mary Shepherd, Catherine Zepp



ZINN ARTHUR

They're 77 to 84 years, but these St. Petersburg, Florida, residents play a heads-up game of softball

Life Begins at 80 ABC-TV show (l. to r.): Fred Stein, Georgiana Carhart, John Draney, M.C. Jack Barry



ZINN ARTHUR

Concluding **WHEN YOU'RE OLD—**

# Life Can Begin

By DR. LOUIS I. DUBLIN and HERBERT YAHRAES

## III

**O**NE raw morning last winter a thin, worried-looking old man we'll call David Kroll hurried up Second Avenue on New York City's East Side. Despite his quick step, he was bound nowhere. After some hours, he would trudge back to his solitary apartment, take a nap, then come out and walk again. It had been this way for a year, ever since his wife died and the little store where he kept books eased him out—all in the same month.

Near Thirteenth Street a truck backfired. Kroll, startled, looked across the avenue. A sign on a building caught his eye. He could make out only

the biggest words: *Sirovich Day Center . . . Come In. Curious, he crossed over and read the rest of it: Open to All Over 60 . . . Regardless of Race, Nationality, or Religion . . . No Charge.*

"Maybe," he told himself, "it wouldn't hurt to go in and get warm a minute."

What Kroll saw inside bewildered him. Groups of old men and women stood in a corridor talking and laughing. In a big room upstairs, dozens of others were sitting around, reading or playing dominoes or cards. Kroll peeked into other rooms and saw women making coffee, men and women painting pictures, women sewing, men working

Mrs. Betty Tompkins, 63, does a Highland fling for other members of Club 60, Newburgh, N.Y.

MAXWELL FREDERIC COPLAN



# WHAT THEN? at 65

with wood. Many looked older than he, but all seemed to be having fun.

On his way out a good-looking young woman came up. "Leaving so soon?" she asked. "Won't you let me introduce you to a few people?"

"Some other time, maybe," Kroll replied. "Today I'm not feeling well."

"Oh, I'm sorry. What's wrong?"

"What I got can't be cured," he said, and hurried out.

What David Kroll was suffering from is the commonest affliction of old age. Nobody has found a name for it, but it's a compound of loneliness, an ache to be understood, a yearning for the prestige other people acquire simply by holding down a job, and a fear that one is no longer good for anything. This nameless ailment is increasingly prevalent because, on the one hand, more of us are living longer, and, on the other, society is pushing more of us to the side lines before we are ready to be pushed.

Today, 11,500,000 Americans are at least 65—which is old age as defined by most pension plans and the Social Security system. Before another 50 years, statisticians estimate, well over 25,000,000 Americans will be chronologically old and therefore potential sufferers from David Kroll's affliction—unless something is done about it.

Something can be done; for this ailment, fortunately, there is both a preventive and a cure. The first basic step is to take an interest in our older folks. This is where most communities and many families fail. Here and there, however, bright patches loom up in the picture. Communities and other groups are showing how a person's later years can be happy even if he must quit his job.

## Expert Opinions About Retirement

The old dream of finding contentment simply by retiring is often a snare and a delusion. Listen to some expert testimony on this point compiled by New York State's Joint Legislative Committee on Problems of the Aging:

Says Dr. Theodore G. Klumpp, head of the Winthrop-Stearns Chemical Company and a student of aging: "It is a biological fact that functions and living tissues that are not used decline and atrophy."

Dr. Edward J. Stieglitz, Washington, D.C., geriatrician, declares: "Premature retirement while one is still vigorous, ambitious and anxious to serve can be a major disease."

Herman E. Hilleboe, New York State Health Commissioner, adds: "Very often the old person does not deteriorate physically and mentally until he is told his usefulness is past and is asked to retire. Then the meaning goes out of life and he begins to reach for the hand of death."

Fortunately, retirement from a job need not mean retirement from life. New York City has demonstrated this convincingly by setting up day centers like the one old David Kroll wandered into.

They spring from an idea of Harry Levine, administrator of special services for the aged under the city's welfare department. Visiting elderly people, he noticed that many seemed especially lonely or irritable between the hours of nine and five, the period they used to spend at work. "What older people need most," he concluded, "is something that will substitute for the loss of the working day."

The first such substitute—Hodson Day Center, in the Bronx, named after the late William Hodson, welfare commissioner—was opened seven years ago. The Sirovich Center, (Continued on page 65)

Collier's for January 20, 1951



David Kroll, 70, retired British army officer, bowls at a Beverly Hills, Calif., playground

John Cures, 72, Phoebe Van Inwegen, 65, Joe Bell, 83, play in Newburgh, N.Y., band





# He's after Your 'HOT BUTTON'.....

**I**N CHICAGO'S stockyard district of 1900, where you had to be tough to survive, there was a goggle-eyed runt of a kid sometimes known as Barney Google. It was a name that Billy De Beck, aged eleven, later creator of the famous comic-page character, made up for his good pal Jack Lacy, aged ten.

Lacy's pint size, his big bespectacled eyes, and his innate Irish fighting prowess—proved conclusively when he licked each of the five older Clancy boys in turn in an epic battle for the newspaper sale rights at Forty-third and Wabash—inspired De Beck to sketch on a wall at that corner what must now be regarded as a historic caricature. He captioned it Jack Barney Google Lacy, His Pitch. It was the first published Google cartoon.

Now sixty years old, Jack Lacy recalls that cartoon with pride. It is not often that a man can boast a physiognomy that inspires a career. Mr. Lacy has ample reason to believe that his, today further enhanced by a bald head and mellowed by the half century, is continuing to inspire thousands. In the field of teaching salesmanship, which is his "pitch" today, he is what South Pacific is to Broadway or the Golden Gate is to San Francisco. And you may emphasize Golden.

Since World War II, some 213,000 sales executives and salesmen have paid to hear him expound the Lacy technique of supersalesmanship. Another 10,000 college students have bought his written courses. Lacy's 10-hour sales clinics in various cities have drawn about 63,000 salesmen, who paid \$15 each. He has received \$150,000 for special company courses. More than 150,000 salesmen have paid \$225,000 to hear him at conventions.

In all, drinkers at the Lacy font of learning have

By **WILLIAM S. DUTTON**

shelled out about \$1,420,000 for the privilege since the war. His share has been about \$860,000. He has estimated that his 1950 income would be about \$200,000—before taxes.

A one-man road show, Lacy, whose home is in Newton Center, Massachusetts, travels more than 60,000 miles yearly. He is booked more than two years ahead. Admirers compare him variously with Will Rogers, Bob Hope and the late evangelist Billy Sunday in the versatility of his platform style. He is the most imitated salesman in America.

All of which, he will tell you modestly, represents a triumph for the Lacy technique rather than for Lacy.

"A good salesman must face facts," he explains, "and I face them every time I shave. In my mirror I see an aging, shopworn, weak-eyed, bald little guy who looks like what? A funny-page character! I know that his stomach is weak, his speech is affected by sinus trouble, and that any beverage stronger than skimmed milk is liable to bring on the gout. And I say, 'Lacy, if you can put over Jack Lacy, you can sell anything under the sun.'"

"And when a lot of husky salesmen look at me up on the platform billed as a hot-shot, what do they say? They say, 'If that poor goof is a star salesman, I must be Superman!'"

With his Irish wit, the zeal of a missionary, and a lifetime's experience in selling everything from books to boxcars, Jack Barney Google Lacy burst upon big-time sales training five years ago like a fresh breeze in a smoke-filled room.

Our sales machine had been allowed to rust during the war. Countless salesmen had drifted into other work. Others had retired or died. Untrained clerks and bored explainers of why-you-can't-get-it had taken over. Consumers were beginning to mutter of mass murder.

Leading sales managers were worried. Ahead was a Gargantuan task. A million new salesmen had to be hired and trained. Another million needed retraining to standards undreamed in prewar days. For into the situation had come two new factors—sky-high costs, and some grim facts. Prewar records showed an incredible overload of poor salesmen. One fourth of the salesmen had sold three fourths of the goods, which meant that most salesmen had been out chiefly for the ride.

With some exceptions, we had never perfected a sales system capable of moving goods year in and year out in undiminished volume. Production techniques had outdistanced selling by years. Professional courses in salesmanship were almost nonexistent, in colleges that were turning out scientists and engineers by the tens of thousands.

## Selling Methods Must Be Modernized

A return to old methods, analysts warned, would be disastrous. Our great producing plant might bog down under a mass of unsold goods. Even a few employers, clinging to outworn practices, might loosen rocks that would start the landslide. A handful of spectacular failures could do it.

And so there came about a shift in business thinking, the biggest change induced by the war's end, according to Robert A. Whitney, president of the National Sales Executives group. The prewar idea was that periodic gluts of the market, followed by unemployment and depressions, were inevitable. Today, that is looked upon as horse-and-buggy thinking.

"We've never had such a thing as more goods on hand than we could use," says Whitney. "We overproduced not in terms of wants but in terms of our selling ability. Our problem is to bring our selling capacity up to our capacities in production and consumption."

National Sales Executives, with headquarters in New York City, took on the job of awakening business to the changed conditions. Its membership was built up to 14,000 sales managers covering every major industry. Through local business groups they held rallies and set up training clinics in important distributing areas. Scholarships were offered and colleges were urged to establish sales schools. Leaders went into high schools to herald salesmanship as the newest profession. Executives took to the road like candidates running for office.

But in 1945 more than pep talks by the boss was needed to start the fires of revival among salesmen in the field. Even good men were rusty. The house cleaning of misfits was not helping morale. Recruits had to be inspired. Needed was a crusader who could preach the new salesmanship as a sort of religion. And he had to be somebody to whom the most cynical old-timer would be willing to listen.

Salesmen make hypercritical audiences. They are accustomed to doing the talking themselves, and they have heard most of the funny stories. Their response to the academic is a loud "Oh, yeah?" The man capable of arousing them had to be of their kind, one who had been over the same bumps, eaten the same soggy meals, put his foot in the same doors, slept in the same beds. Furthermore, said New York, he had to be of that rare

Lacy tells a Los Angeles clinic a salesman can succeed or fail in the first 30 seconds



Collier's for January 20, 1951