



2 Metro Living 50+, Spring 2007

# Discovering what's next

*Live your personal legacy*

By CINDY J. ROTH

The kids are grown up and out of the house. The mortgage is paid off. The retirement party at work was bittersweet. The trip around the world was fabulous. It was everything you imagined and dreamed.

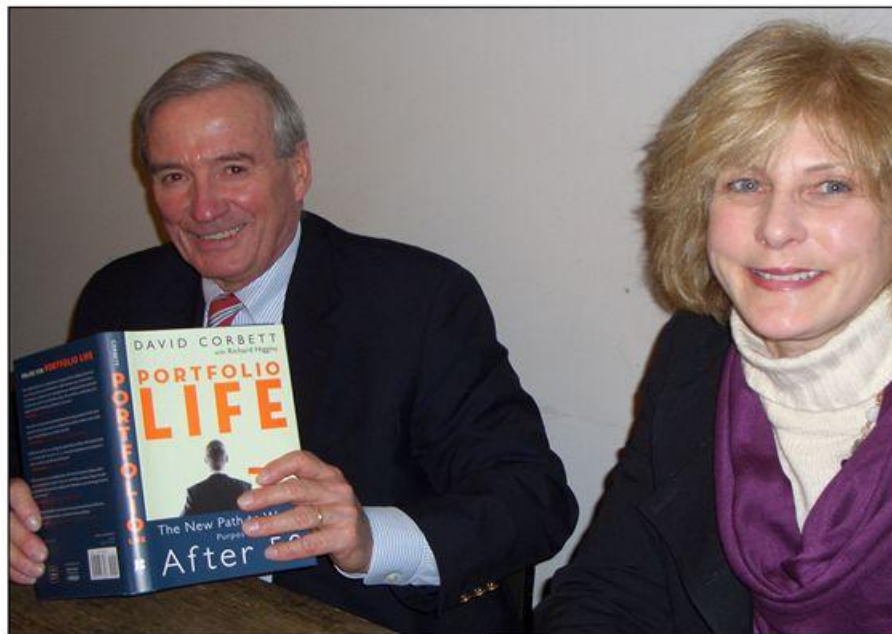
You've gotten to all the little projects in the house that were, until now, on the back burner. As you sit on your couch, reading the newspaper, for the first few weeks you think to yourself, this is the life. By the second month you find yourself breaking things in the house so you have a reason to go out to the store and have something to do.

Everyone you meet says you are so lucky to be retired, but you know better. You've been trying for months to come up with the perfect hobby. However, after working 30 years, it's hard to imagine doing anything else. The same question keeps echoing in your head – what do I do now?

Discovering What's Next, a non-profit group based at the Newton Free Library, aims to help adults 50 plus negotiate the transitions associated with retirement. According to Carol Greenfield, DWN founder and president, the group is finding out people don't want to just fill their time, they want it to be meaningful. At this stage in their life, Greenfield said, people are starting to give more serious thought to how they can make a difference today and in the future after they are gone. People are looking to leave a legacy.

"No one deals with lifestyle changes associated with retirement. Businesses don't prepare people for the next stage of life. The government isn't doing it. So the community has to step in and that's what we've done," said Greenfield. "From the [DWN] work over the last four years, we've realized [a legacy] is something people are thinking about and we're trying to give them a practical way to make that happen."

DWN will launch a multi-faceted Legacy Initiative this spring. The initiative will include two large forums at the Newton Free Library, several hands-on workshops and many resource materials. The first forum in March will focus on discovering a person's inspiration to find a personal perspective on legacy. A group of panelists will discuss the different ways they are leaving a legacy, through social action, philanthropy and the passing on of values. The second forum in April will host a panel of experts with an overview of ways to take action in creating a personal legacy. The panel will include values-based



Author Dave Corbett and DWN Transition Navigator Christine Osborne at a recent book signing. Below: Just Ask Button - The Discovering What's Next motto is Just Ask!

estate and financial planners and experts on ethical wills and philanthropy. Additional hands-on workshops will focus on specific legacy action topics.

"The Legacy Initiative is about taking values and expressing them now, not leaving it to do in a will," notes Shirley Selhub, DWN VP of Programs. "It's about ordinary people wanting to create a legacy, to transmit a value."

Cyndi Jones, co-chair, with Beth Tishler, of the Legacy Initiative, turned her own personal tragedy into a legacy for her late husband and family. About six years ago Jones started to think about what was important in her life. She thought about the many people who

were supportive of her and her three children when her first husband died 19 years ago. It was then she realized she wanted to do something to pay back for all that was done for her and her children.

As a working parent, Jones remembered how hard it was to juggle work and child-care over the summer. Jones's kids were fortunate to go to many wonderful camps over the summer, which were very helpful to her. Jones's first husband was also a huge camp fanatic. With this reflection, Jones decided to open a foundation, Wildflower Camp Foundation, to offer scholarships to send children to camp for families with a deceased parent. "The foundation gives me a sense of

completion that my life has come full circle, that I've been able to use my experience as a grieving parent and help those in similar situations," said Jones, 58 of Wellesley. "It's a combination of carrying on the legacy of my first husband who grew up loving summer camp. I also think of it in terms of my children. They are involved in the foundation. I feel really good about the message to my children about giving back. That we've been able to help out other people who were in our shoes."

Jones, a life-planning consultant, said she is really intrigued with the sense of legacy because in the past it's been thought of as something only associated with someone who has died.

"We are creating our legacy every day by the decisions we make. If you think about it now, you can bring some intention and thought to the legacy you want to leave when you can still have an impact," said Jones.

