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Retirement books make useful gifts
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WITH THE holidays upon us, some of you may be looking for gifts for retirees or future retirees. Why not consider a good book on the subject? The following favorites of mine can be found at most bookstores or on the Internet:

■ "The Joy of Not Working," by Ernie Zelinski. (Ten Speed Press, 2003). This is still my favorite retirement book. Now in its second printing, this book offers a good mix of depth and levity about life when it doesn't revolve around earning money. It's easy to read, there are some great cartoons, and the sections on activities are worth the price of admission in themselves. I've recommended this book as the primary text in my classes for years, and I don't think I've ever heard of anyone being disappointed.

■ "Get a Life, You Don't Need a Million to Retire Well," by Ralph Warner (Nolo Press, 2002). Moving into second place this year, this book blends retirement lifestyle advice with scenarios of real people who are enjoying retirement without first having accumulated fortunes. The best parts of the book involve advice about loving life, not money. Most of the profiles of



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The Art of Retirement

retirees are of those living in the San Francisco Bay Area.

■ "Retire Smart, Retire Happy," by Nancy K. Schlossberg (APA Life Tools, 2004). Although this is not a book that tries to be comprehensive in its approach to retirement issues, I think that it is very worth the read because of its sage advice about transitions in retirement. It gives us not only tools to use for the initial transition but also tells us to expect a series of retirement transitions, for which these same tools can be used over and over again. The extensive research and interviews done by the author really pay dividends for the reader.

■ "How to Retire Happy, Wild and Free," by Ernie Zelinski (Ten Speed Press, 2004). Using quite a different format from that in "The Joy of Not Working," author Zelinski gives us more of his best, via stories that others have brought him or that he has found along his way. The result is a blend of

positive, informative advice about the joys of retirement, done in a format of a well-thought-out preface, followed by about 50 sections on various aspects of retirement.

■ "Retirement on a Shoestring," by John Howells (Globe Pequot, 2004). From the author of "Where to Retire," "Choose Costa Rica," "Choose Mexico" and many others in this series, this book gives retirement strategies on how to live in retirement comfortably without great wealth. The chapters on college towns in retirement and on RVs in retirement are classics, full of useful insights. The book also has sections on women in retirement and on singles, two subjects that seldom come up in other books.

My honorable mention list includes "Breaking the Watch," by Joel Savishinsky; "How to Retire Happy," by Stan Hinden; "Rags to Retirement," by Gail Liberman and Alan Lavine; and "Kiplinger's Retire & Thrive," by Robert Otterbourg.

George Fulmore's course, "The Art of Retirement," begins Jan. 18 in the Mt. Diablo Adult Education program. Call 925-937-1530 for more information. Contact him at ArtofRet@aol.com.