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Spotlight on Seniors

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## Baby Boomer Festival: fun, finances, flirting

BY SARAH COOPER  
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It was the age of the hula hoop, the sock hop and the Cold War. Elvis still reigned as king and cruisin' put kids on cloud nine. The years surrounding the 1950s were filled with fun and the biggest population boom in recent U.S. history.

More than 76 million people were born in the United States during the fun between 1946 and 1964.

And thousands of these boomers are expected to mix and mingle at the Silver Legacy in Reno this Friday, Saturday and Sunday.

"We are the largest age group in America and the most affluent," said Rich Gosse, the producer of this weekend's Baby Boomers Festival.

The weekend will be filled with workshops and mixers for purposes ranging from financial planning to a flirting contest.

When asked what people will get out of the weekend, Gosse responded, "Number one has to be fun."

The event is sponsored by such social organizations as [www.WineSocials.com](http://www.WineSocials.com), [www.LockandKeyMatch.com](http://www.LockandKeyMatch.com) and the Society of Single Professionals.



Tribune/Debra Reid

Jim Newell and Trish Sutula sample the offerings at a recent Wine Walk in the West Street Market. This weekend's Baby Boomer Festival will join in on this Saturday's Reno Wine Walk, capitalizing on a favorite pastime of the boomer generation.

festival will also feature a workshop on the more serious financial aspects of retirement.

"Goal number two will be education," Gosse said. "We want them to leave knowing things they didn't know before the weekend."

Saturday at 10 a.m., Chris Abts, CEO of Cornerstone Retirement Group in Reno, will take the Silver Legacy Ballroom stage to talk about

planning for retirement.

According to Gosse, boomers are retiring in record numbers, with thousands reaching retirement age every day.

And although boomers have traditionally been one of the most affluent groups in America, a February survey by the Center for Economic and Policy Research shows that the late boomers, those between the ages of 45 and 54,

have lost almost 45 percent of their net worth over the past five years.

Abt's presentation will cover stock market investments, tax problems, beneficiaries and managing your IRA, among other topics.

Other speakers will include keynote speaker Ann Fry on Friday afternoon speaking on the topic of "It's Boomer Time!"

"Her (Fry's) speech will be more of a motivational, uplifting talk about how it is great to be a boomer," Gosse said.

On Saturday, Gosse will

take the stage himself speaking on "Finding a Boomer to Love."

Other speakers on Saturday will include, Tana Marie, "How to Find Love During a Recession," Phyllis May on "Retired Not Retired," Susan Bradley on "How Flirt Without Appearing to Be in Heat," which will be followed by a flirting contest - as well as Francesca Gentile and Tahl Geeyuk on "Harmonious Sexuality and Relationships."

For a full schedule of events, visit [www.baby-boomersfestival.com](http://www.baby-boomersfestival.com).



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The event's opening night will feature a "Baby Boomers Bash" dance at 9 p.m. The following days will be filled with an astrological matchmaking party, a baby boomer's brunch and a Saturday night ball where boomers are asked to "dress to impress."

The festival will also capitalize on a Reno tradition, joining in on Reno's Saturday wine walk along the Truckee River.

"We know from our experience that one of the things that boomers like to do is drink fine wine," Gosse said. "They are not a beer guzzling crowd."

Gosse has put on boomer events in the Bay Area, where his company is based, but says that he does not know of any other national boomer festivals.

"Boomers work hard and they play hard," Gosse said. "We didn't want it to all be serious."

Although mixers and mingling will abound, the boomers

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