

At My Age

By Hap Hansen

Why is youth wasted on the young? That is a good question. For me, in most cases, youth is not wasted on the young. Here are some examples: Many years ago, I recall going dancing and Jitterbugging from nine p.m. to one a.m. If I tried that today, after one dance, they'd have to haul me off in an ambulance! One question. Why did they call it a Jitterbug? What the heck is a Jitterbug anyway?

I must admit that sometimes I miss my younger days. Just sitting around, drinking beer with my friends and telling the same old dirty jokes, over and over again. I still occasionally try to tell an off-color joke, but the problem now is that I can never remember the punch line! Even today, when my kids and grandkids visit, except for the younger ones, they sit around drinking beer and telling their brand of jokes that Grandpa no longer understands. Even when they remember the punch lines!

I no longer drink beer or hard liquor, primarily because my heart doctor has limited me to one or two glasses of wine for dinner. I recall, that many times in my wasted youth, even not too long ago, I thoroughly enjoyed a glass of Scotch and water and even an occasional vodka martini on the rocks ... two olives please!

Another reason why youth is not wasted on the young: Many times, when my kids visit, they don't even think about having dinner until eight p.m. or later. I either don't participate, or I'm napping on the couch because they're eating and drinking well past my bedtime!

Another reason why youth is not wasted on the young: Just a week and a half ago, my daughter and son-in-law took me to see the stage play, *White Christmas*. It was delightful, but they failed to tell me that it did not start until eight p.m. and wasn't over until ten-thirty! Fortunately, there was a 20-minute intermission, so I took a nap in my chair, oblivious to all the commotion around me. I also got another nap in the car as they drove me home. At my age, napping is not a waste of time!

Today's youth are smarter, brighter and more involved in most aspects of life. I'm glad I did not have to compete with today's youth when I was growing up. They would have left me so far behind that I would have spent a lifetime digging ditches and serving them just in order to survive. I do not want to go back to being a youth. So, in my opinion, youth is not wasted on the young, but it sure would have been wasted on me!