

## Today Is My Favorite Day

*By Hap Hansen*

Every day of the week is my favorite day. I remember one of my most favorite days was twenty-five years ago, when my last formal working day for a corporation came to a close. Years and years of working for the same company. Years and years of ups and downs, good managers and bad, major decisions and small ones too. Now it's over.

Today is my favorite day. And I am glad. No more seven a.m. meetings. No more late nights worrying about emergencies. No more power lunches. No more domineering bosses. No more employee problems. No more irate customers. No more missed birthdays and anniversaries. No more travel to flea-bitten motels. No more conferences. No more corporate downsizing.

Today is my favorite day. And I am glad. My working career spanned 45 years, which counts my very first part-time, but paying job: wrapping butter in the local creamery for two-bits an hour in pay. Then college. Then the Armed Forces. Then full-time jobs. Never unemployed. In all those years, there were only five employers and I worked for the last one for more than twenty-five years. Loyalty. It doesn't count for much anymore, but it meant something to me. And when loyalty was given, it was usually returned. Not anymore. Not today. And probably never again. The new world of dog-eat-dog competition no longer allows companies the luxury of keeping highly paid, older employees. All of the hundreds of problems and worries of the everyday working world have now disappeared for me. They were replaced by just three: Would I have enough money? Would I have enough to do? Would my family understand? Financial changes were obviously necessary. I was convinced my family would not only understand, they would and did flourish under the new scenario.

Today is my favorite day. And I am glad. There is time now for dreaming, for playing, for planning and for doing all those things I talked about for years. My goal then was to be like several retirees who told me, "I'm so busy in retirement, I don't know how I ever had time to work at my old job!" Now, I can go watch my grandchildren as they participate in sports, or plays, or music. Somehow, that may make up for all those events I missed when my own children were growing up.

Today is my favorite day. And I am glad. That then, was *my* biggest challenge. Retirement. And all the things that go with it. To be happy. To be healthy. To be productive. To make societal contributions. And most of all, to help make sure my family gets all of those things. Today, and every new day are my favorite days of the week. And I am glad.