

Iron Disulfide

By Pete Clark

My golden years arrived some time ago, but I have not figured out why they should be considered to be gilded. They are just years to be managed and survived. The main difference is now I am home most of the time and not out among people. My social life has become visits to supermarkets, the post office and my bank. Standing in line at a grocery store can be very entertaining and I have had many short but interesting conversations while waiting for my turn with the cashier.

The term 'Golden Years' was coined and came to the fore in 1959 as an advertising gimmick for Del Webb's Sun City, Arizona development, the first community built solely for retirees. The advertising targeted people fifty-five and older who wished to maintain an active lifestyle. The settlement was built around a golf course whose creation cost in the neighborhood of \$2,000,000. Sun City has been successful in the extreme and popularized the concept of developments primarily catering to those who are at the end of their working lives.

I live in one of the oldest retirement communities in the country and, yes, it has a golf course. Unfortunately, I have no interest in playing Cow Pasture Pool and the things I love to do are a world away. Even so, I have been very fortunate during my life. I was able to retire, without a lot of frills, but with security. Too many people get to their golden years only to discover that the glint of gold is generated by iron disulfide, otherwise known as iron pyrite or fool's gold.

I occupy my time with doing household chores, shopping, reading, writing and doctor's appointments. These endeavors keep me fairly busy, but I do have one benefit that was mostly missing during my working years. I have the time needed to closely examine my past, from toddler to septuagenarian and assess my accomplishments and my failures. I have always tried to live up to my conception of what is a good person. I have missed that mark a few times, but I can live with those memories. My dad taught me, by example, if you get knocked down, you get up even stronger than before. So come on world, do your damndest. I will still be here, living in my hermitage, after most anything you can do to me has faded into the past.