

## What the Changing of the Guard Means to Me

*By Diane Parker*

I still haven't considered what changing of the guard means to me ... but I am going to give it a try. For eight decades I have been growing up, learning, accepting and rejecting experiences, and trying to "dodge" as much of the negative side of a society's downside of living.

Now what does that mean? I am not sure. I watch the news once in a while ... just enough to say I know somewhat of what is going on in my world. I keep track of the weather much more often.

Although I worked and retired from the corporate world, I have to admit, I might have made a much better and more contented life if I had stayed in my rural roots and married my first sweetheart and been a rancher's wife and mothered ranch kids.

My life, as I have come to describe it, is ... striving to reach the top of that fourteener in the Rockies ... at the age of eighty?

What am I thinking? I reached twenty-two of them before fifty years old ... but at eighty? Now I don't smoke pot or pass my time with a glass of bourbon in my hand (maybe I missed something because I didn't?)

Life at Windsor Gardens since March, 2020 has been a lot quieter than I like it to be. I totally understand ... and agree ... about the Covid-19 and the distancing and isolation situation. Doesn't keep me from complaining about it though.

By mid-April I was so desperate for social companionship I was stopping total strangers and complimenting them on their unique masks ... how uncomfortable they were ... how etc., etc., etc. I still don't pay any attention to the green arrow and red do-not-go-down-this-aisle signs. Over thirty years of shopping at the Havana King Supers and I am all of a sudden going to pay attention to those aisle signs?

Believe me I am not out in the public ignoring the distancing and the wearing the mask rules. Therefore, I still run my errand business ... getting grocery lists and shopping for elders who are homebound and complete stay-at-homes. There are two other elders I take to the grocery store but need help from the car and into the store and back to their homes.

I am a home companion twice a week for a young senior diagnosed with the beginning of Alzheimer's. And yes ... as with everything else I have learned ... I try to keep my common sense sharpened and do as much as I can to keep healthy and well.

I miss the WG fitness center most of all ... and I am not alone. Almost every day I run into a fitness center buddy and we all have the same complaints ... when is our center going to be reopened?

I think a lot about my eightieth birthday adventure to Honolulu in February, 2020. My entire first family went with me. How fortunate we were able to enjoy that time together, some of us for the first time ever in Hawaii, and fly home before all this virus hoopla came, slamming shut

our social doors. It was the trip of a lifetime ... and made me think about how much I might have enjoyed the rest of my retirement life on the island ... because I wouldn't have to wear winter clothing for eight months out of the year ... and I could ride my street scooter all the time!