

Rainbow Seniors of Western New York (RSWNY)
Come on! Let's Get Involved!

During the past few weeks, I have been thinking about my involvement in organizations and in general, my involvement in life. I thought about what all of this means to me. How involvement provides me with consistent good health. How involvement encourages and maintains family and friend relationships. How involvement assists me in feeling good emotionally. So you ask, how and why is this important to write about? Well, I hope to share, through some of my experiences, the value of involvement and describe that one is neither too young nor too old to reap the benefits of giving back to our community, to family, to friends and especially, to self.

Recently, I received a call from a former sister-in-law from Sioux Falls, SD. She left a message that she would like to talk with me. Naturally, my immediate reaction was one of fear (sound familiar?). I returned the call and my fear was completely removed. She was simply thinking about me and missing me. Despite a divorce from her brother, many years ago, I maintained my involvement with the family because of love, care, concern, and friendship. They were an important "family," and no matter what, I hoped I would be a part of their lives forever. Fortunately, they feel the same way.

This week, I received an email from my brother (and my friend). Our hometown (Walnut Grove, Minnesota) basketball team, a team in the 1957 Minnesota state basketball tournament, is planning a reunion (50 years). The team wants to include the cheerleaders. You guessed it! I was on the cheerleading team. For me, this is one more example of how an experience of being in the middle of something can bring back precious and happy memories and maybe, a fun reunion.

Last month, I was asked to serve on a Nominations Committee for a professional organization of which I am a member. Although, serving on this ad hoc committee required time and energy, it was for a brief period of time and required minimal energy. After a few calls and email messages, the committee successfully submitted a slate of two names each office, secretary and treasurer. At that point, my work was done.

So, perhaps you wonder where I am going with all of this, right? I am very engaged in the activities of Rainbow Seniors of Western New York and my message to the reader is my hope that you will consider joining and also consider some kind of involvement. As a member of the Board, I realize that the benefits are far greater than any amount of time and energy I have given to the organization. Through RSWNY, I have new and renewed friendships with the GLBTI community - events, potlucks, yoga, parties, special meals out with friends. RSWNY people and activities are helping me age gracefully and have fun at the same time. I am also learning about how various legislation affects the GLBTI community and how I can make a difference as one person.

So, come on! Join the fun, learning, giving, sharing, and the pleasure. Get involved a little or a lot. It's up to you, but I am pretty sure, like me, you will also reap many benefits. RSWNY is sponsoring its fourth annual Intergenerational Panel at 4:00 PM,

Sunday, March 18 in the 1st Universalist Sanctuary, followed by our traditional potluck. This event is open to the community and free of charge. Interested in more? Participate in “chair” yoga classes at the First Unitarian Church, 220 S. Winton, 6:00 PM. There’s more! Euchre Club meets on the first Sunday of each month. We will have new office and drop-in space at the Downtown United Presbyterian Church (DUPC) in March. I know you’re getting excited to become involved, right? Check out our newsletter and learn about the events mentioned above – all can be found on the web site, www.rainbowseniorswny.org. I hope to see you soon. Marilyn Mitchell