

COLORS 43: LEISURE WORLD

- How Harry died on the 18th hole.
- When Jesus got lost in the Arizona desert.
- The many lives of Virginia Russell.
- Sex after life with Viagra.

If the world were controlled by the elderly, what would it look like? The answer: Leisure World, the largest gated retirement village in the world. For COLORS 43 we sent a team of writers and photographers to southern California to have a look.

From Holocaust survivors to synchronized swimmers, Leisure World is home to 18,000 old people. The average resident is 77.5 years old; 42 percent of the community is over 80. And only 35 percent of Leisure World's population is male (women live seven years longer than men, on average). It is almost exclusively white. We saw one black resident.

Leisure World—or seizure world as it is jokingly referred to by outsiders—is guarded by an army of elderly police officers. The gates and walls serve to keep out door-to-door salesmen and other unwelcome outsiders, as well as unwanted family members. “I wouldn’t want to live with my children,” 69-year-old Gloria Day said, as she reclined next to one of Leisure World’s five swimming pools. “It’s okay when they live with you, but living with them—no thanks!”

With children and grandchildren out of the way, Leisure Worlders are free to get on with the more important things in life, like table tennis, ballroom dancing, golf and sex. While they sleep, an invisible army of Mexican immigrants tend to their gardens.

But Leisure World is not a reality most old people can afford. So for the second half of COLORS 43 we commissioned our correspondents to interview and photograph residents of old age homes around the world. From China to Australia to Indonesia, COLORS has documented the reality of growing old in 2001.

In a world dominated by youth culture, COLORS brings old age to the newsstands. Available in April .

For further information: www.colors magazine.com