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By Brian Gray

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MONROE -- After a lifetime on the farm, Arnold Fryer found himself wondering what to do with his time.

At age 65, he decided it was time to retire, but it was going to be hard to get out of the daily routine.

Every day he milked cows, once in the morning and once at night. Along with milking cows was the regular farm work: putting up hay, working on tractors and generally making sure the farm was in perfect running order.

"I grew up on the farm. I had my heart in it," he said. "It was hard to sell the cows."

But nine years ago, he took the step to retire.

Some people get depressed when they retire. They've gotten into the habit of getting up for work for the past many, many years and once they leave their job, they don't think they have anything to look forward to.



Don Jacobson, 76, Monroe, aims for stripes in a game of pool Friday afternoon at the Behring Senior Center.

Times photo: Kayla Bunge

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The Web site, www.aetnbehavioralhealth.com states: "As

with any life change, retirement brings its share of mental and emotional turmoil. Depending on how you deal with it, retirement can be an exciting time filled with new opportunities or a painful time transition that brings boredom, lack of purpose and discouragement."

Fryer decided not to let retirement get him down.

"You still have to get up in the morning," he laughed.

To pass the time, he spent more time gardening.

"You have to do something," he said.

Fryer likes to go to the Behring Senior Center of Monroe and visit friends and play cards. He also spends time at his grandchildren's sporting events.

"It gives you something to look forward to," Fryer said.

According to the Aetna Web site, staying active is important to people who retire.

A lot of people don't stop working when they retire, but instead switch to a shorter work week. Some people pick up part-time jobs driving a school bus, working at a department store or even taking care of their grandchildren to help them keep busy.

For others, like Fryer, it's a chance to spend more time with hobbies such as gardening, reading or fishing.

Retirement offers more time for people to find hobbies they never thought of before.

A key ingredient to retirement is to stay active.

"Studies have found that people who keep their bodies moving after retirement live longer and have fewer health problems," the Aetna Web site states.

Friendship is also important to retirees.

As people age, they find they have fewer friends. It's only natural that some of their

friends die or move away.

Fryer and countless others have found new friends at the senior center and other places where seniors can spend a day playing cards, drinking coffee or just visiting.

Other seniors pass the time by volunteering at local schools, churches or community organizations.

The important thing, Fryer said, is to relax and have fun.

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