

Andrew 0:04

Hello, and welcome to the JGUA financial commentary podcast. I'm your host, Andrew Barron. And today, my guest is Nora Smith. And this episode, we're here to talk about going beyond the numbers of the financial plan, and talk about community involvement, and creating a sense of purpose in retirement and life in general. But before we start a short disclaimer, the contents of this podcast are strictly for informational purposes only, and nothing said shall be taken as investment, tax or legal advice. And these strategies discussed may not be suitable for the listener specifically. And JGUA encourages consulting with your advisor before implementing any strategies to ensure they meet your individual objectives. And with that, welcome to the podcast, Nora.

Nora 0:56

Hi, Andrew, how are you today?

Andrew 0:57

I'm doing very well. How are you?

Nora 1:00

I'm hanging in there.

Andrew 1:01

Before we start the very first thing. Happy birthday, Nora.

Nora 1:04

Oh, thank you. Thank you.

Andrew 1:07

I know you weren't expecting me to do that. But

Nora 1:09

thank you for announcing that to the world. Andrew, I appreciate it.

Andrew 1:13

I didn't say the number. I'm just

Nora 1:14

okay, you better that you better not.

Andrew 1:18

In the past, the guests that I've had are from our advisory group and from our research analysts, but Nora is a manager in our information systems department. And you were one of the first employees of the firm. How big was the firm when you started?

Nora 1:32

I was probably 10th employee or so?

Andrew 1:36

Are there any changes you expect to see moving forward over the next 5-10 years?

Nora 1:42

Over the next 5-10 years? That's a hard question to answer, Andrew, hopefully, I'll be out traveling the world in 10 years, being on my around the world cruise and seeing all the places I want to go back to five years, I'll probably still be around doing some work here doing more volunteer work in the community and just enjoying life in a different way. I guess.

Andrew 2:03

The big reason I wanted to have you on the podcast was I'd like our audience to start thinking about personal finance being bigger than just things like investments and taxes, and how financial planning is really planning for life as you pass through different stages. And while money obviously plays a big role in that, another big aspect is being involved in your community, and participating and bettering your community. And while there are a number of ways to do that, and actually one of the old podcasts, we talked about charities. Another way to do this is through volunteer work. And besides being an IS Manager, I know that you're pretty involved in volunteering.

Nora 2:45

Thank you, Andrew,

Andrew 2:46

you have a personal and impressive story to share. Can you talk to us about what inspired you to become such an active volunteer?

Nora 2:53

Well, one thing about living in a small town is you get to know the people and they always look after you. My mother was a school teacher had a nursery school. So we would help her out at times. My dad was a volunteer fireman for Painted Post for a number of years. My grandparents were involved in the community. My grandfather made a one of the monuments up and painted whole square. Our family's always been involved in the community.

Andrew 3:17

Is there something about the 1972 flood you wanted to talk about?

Nora 3:21

Oh 72 flood. My dad was on Firemen's duty on the day before he came home to get some sleep. We live up on a little hill. So my dad was like, oh, we're going to be fine. We're going to be fine. I remember waking up about two o'clock in the morning. And all of a sudden you looked out the front door and you could see the water coming down the street. So we gathered up our few possessions we could take our dog and went over to Calvin U. Smith elementary school that we could walk to. And my dad stayed in the house because he was the fireman and wanted to make sure everything was okay. We then left Calvin Smith school because the rumor was the water was coming up there. We went up to some relatives of my neighbors way up on West Hill terrace and we could as we're driving up the hill, we looked out down the road and you could see just the tips of the spring pond apartments sticking out of the water it was so high. And finally late in the afternoon. My dad comes walking into this house with his fireman's coat still on. And so then we knew everybody was okay. But that's how the community really really started to come together. Neighbors helped neighbors everybody would pitch in if you needed to tear your carpets out. So just different things like that. But everybody comes together during something like that.

Andrew 4:36

And you say this helped shape your community focus and involvement.

Nora 4:40

During the 72 flood. Everybody just came together and did what had to be done to move forward. It's a bittersweet memory. You know, it was just so hard to get in touch with other people, other family members or friends to know if they were all right or not. There was no central point. It was all done via paper. A lot of different things happened during the month of June of 72. June and July of 72.

Andrew 5:02

oh Wow,

Nora 5:03

we all still watch the river to these days.

Andrew 5:07

I've heard that from everyone who's lived through it.

Nor I know you serve on quite a few boards. Could you share with us on how you first got started in serving these leadership roles?

Nora 5:19

So Bud Gleason, who was one of our longtime employees here, he was in the Corning Rotary Club and he thought that would be a great way for me to make other connections because I had just moved back to the area from a prior job. So he got me started in rotary that other people there asked you would you like to volunteer for this or for that? So over the course of the years, see, I've been on the United Way allocations committees, I volunteered to get up at Oh, dark 30 to put the wineglass marathon mile, mile markers up, I'm on the Corning Community College Alumni Board. Currently, I am on a board with the first heritage Federal Credit Union Association. And then many of us volunteered with the LPGA. Well, that was in town, the Ladies Professional Golf Association, we've run the food tents and come home every night just covered in grease, from flipping burgers and hot sausages all day long. But it was fun. We all had a great time. That's what volunteering is all about is having a good time and helping the community.

Andrew 6:14

So besides the kind of cliché, but it's true, the good feelings you get from volunteering, could you talk to us maybe tell story about some of the benefits you've personally seen through volunteering.

Nora 6:26

One of the most recent ones that I think the most beneficial One is through the Corning Rotary Club, probably three, four or five years ago, the club adopted a class a kindergarten class at Winfield Street school, we provided them with a book every month that they would read with the class and will go along with the theme of the year. Then at the end of the year, we had a luncheon for them at the Radisson where we had our rotary meetings. And some of these kids in this class had never been to a restaurant to eat before. And they were just so excited to come in. And they were all dressed up very nice. And they came in we had them sit with different Rotarians and they all carried on conversations, and a couple of them got up and spoke to us. And it was just one of the best feelings you've ever had in your life to see these kids and how excited they were about something that was so simple as to give them a book. And we've continued that project. Now we're over in Severn School. And we have I think that there's two classes at Winfield Street school that we're working with. And two other local organizations also picked up on the program and sponsor classes in the school. So it's been a wonderful, wonderful endeavor,

Andrew 7:33

thank you for sharing that. A lot of times people can feel bogged down with obligations, especially things like work. And maybe they feel isolated from their friends. And this was even kind of before the pandemic, there are a lot of people adopting kind of a survivor mentality, where they really just kind of focused on reaching a threshold. And oftentimes,

that's retirement. And there's a group of people who subscribe to this mentality. And we see it a lot, where people with a certain level of success are in this group. And because those jobs are often a lot, sometimes people are putting in 80, 100 hours a week, it's a lot of stress, partly because of those long hours, and just the responsibility of these jobs can have. But on the other side, it can also be a lot of money, these jobs can be very well compensated. So if you're making \$300, \$400, \$500,000 a year, it's understandable that someone could think if I could just go 5-6-7 more years, life's gonna be different. And I can do the things that I've been planning on doing and delaying. So Nora, I want to have your take on work life balance.

Nora 8:48

I think that's probably one of the most important things to talk about. Because I do know some people that have been in high positions at various companies, and they work and work and work and then they retire and they have an illness or a hardship come up, and they're not able to enjoy that time. I want to be able to enjoy my older years, maybe I should say as I move on, and just be able to do things and enjoy it. If you put all your eggs in one basket. It's your job. I don't think it matters really. You can make a lot of money, but you still have to enjoy your life. And that's what I try to do is enjoy my life while I can.

Andrew 9:21

Can you talk to us a little bit, especially those people who are working large number of hours at work, they've been successful over the years and they want to give back but they tell themselves I'm going to give back when I retire. But maybe that is still like I said 5-6-7 years away. Can you talk about getting involved now?

Nora 9:42

I think it's important to get involved in your community as soon as you can because you meet a whole different range of people volunteering in these different organizations. And usually through one organization you can get connected with another one and another one and another one and you'll find the one or two that you really enjoy being with and you like to do, it's making a lot of connections with people. And that's what makes it fun. Volunteering is supposed to be fun.

Andrew 10:07

One of the phrases we hear around the firm is that making sure our clients are retiring to something. And they aren't just fleeing and retiring from a job. Because retirement really is bigger than just an extended vacation. Could you talk to us a little bit more about community involvement or being a board member as providing a purpose, especially for those approaching retirement.

Nora 10:31

I think just being involved in any type of a service organization or a nonprofit, you're meeting a lot of people. And that's how you start to make a difference in life. And you'll find something that I've said before, that really strikes you as important. And you want to follow that on. Boards are a great way to meet other people from different walks of life. And you can find something totally different that somebody does that you never thought you'd be interested in before. And it's just a way to keep a connection with your community. And wherever you are to retire to. There's always rotary clubs or libraries to volunteer at. So you're always going to need those connections to move forward in your volunteering life. And you want to enjoy your retirement you can go hiking, you can ride your bike, you can walk, you can check on your neighbors, you can bake bread to take to some neighbors, you know, it's just different things you have the opportunity to do. And it's through all those connections you meet on a board or in any service organization helps you move forward with what you really want to do when you do get a chance to retire.

Andrew 11:32

There's something almost human about looking forward to things and enjoying things now. And not just getting caught up in things like work or

Nora 11:40

it's absolutely true. My philosophy has been as I said, you always need something to look forward to.

Andrew 11:47

Did you have any closing thoughts, Nora?

Nora 11:50

Just take advantage of all the opportunities that come your way in life. It's too short to always be going Oh, I wish I had done that or I wish I had done this. Have fun with your life. I guess that's all I can tell you. Thank you, Andrew.

Andrew 12:03

That's a perfect sentiment to end on. Thank you very much, Nora, for being part of this. And thank you to all of our listeners. We do have other webinars and additional content on our website. And if our audience does have any questions, feel free to send any questions or comments to [info@jgua.com](mailto:info@jgua.com). Until next time, stay smart everyone