

A SPECIAL DOUBLE ISSUE ON THE GOOD LIFE

BEGIN HERE AND HAVE

The Good Life! It's two swimming pools in every backyard, and a jet weekend to Bali. Or is it? Opinions differ. Differing opinions make good horse races and good material for LIFE, week by week. And when a situation affects practically all our readers, a special year-end double issue is called for. So this year's subject is our new-found good life, growing out of our new-found leisure.

On one count there is no real argument. The new leisure is here. For the first time a civilization has reached a point where most people are no longer preoccupied exclusively with providing food and shelter. The shrinking work week now gives us about 75 free, waking hours

as compared with a bare 55 two generations ago. Almost every employe in the land gets a two-day weekend and a vacation. Furthermore, people have the cash to enjoy their time off. But how the new leisure got here and whether it's boon or bane are the questions we take up.

Your Good Life is so much a matter of individual choice that we will merely suggest here that you address yourself to it as LIFE has, by going through the issue from here to the last page. After that, as to what you think about it and what you do about it, you are strictly on your own.

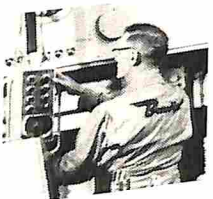
There was a time when only the rich had much leisure



THE GAY OLD DAYS

Five artists paint memorable episodes—some rowdy and some classy like the yacht party of J. P. Morgan (*left*)—of the old days when leisure was a luxury that belonged to a well-heeled few

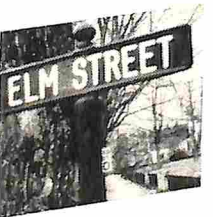
12



WHAT BROUGHT THE CHANGE

Startling color photographs dramatize one important source of America's leisure: the introduction of automated production (*left*) which brings with it more and cheaper goods and better jobs

36



SATURDAY A.M. ON ELM

The big leisure bonus is Saturday morning and LIFE turns six photographers loose in two U.S. Elm Streets to record the important news story of the precious day off

53

EDITORIAL

Leisure can mean a new civilization. By using it, Americans can raise unparalleled standards of excellence

62

PASSING OF A PRIVATE PLAY YARD

A last stronghold of oldtime elegance is sold

64



FROM 1890 to 1975: LEISURE

THE CELEBRITIES' LEISURE

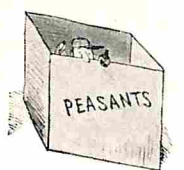
From playing French horn to collecting campaign buttons, some well-known Americans like Ralph Bunche (*left*) set an example by putting spare time to the use that refreshes

76

A \$40 BILLION BILL FOR FUN

LIFE Staff Writer Robert Coughlan examines the nation's huge leisure business and finds that everything from worm-raising to water-skiing helps bolster the U.S. economy to the tune of \$40 billion a year

69



WHAT'S YOUR LEISURE RATING?

Russell Lynes, a witty observer (with an assist by Artist Mike Ramus), charts a new type of class system—from aristocrat to peasant—based on how you spend leisure

85

DO IT YOURSELF

High labor costs make home handymen think they are having fun and saving money

90



GREAT U.S. PLAYGROUND

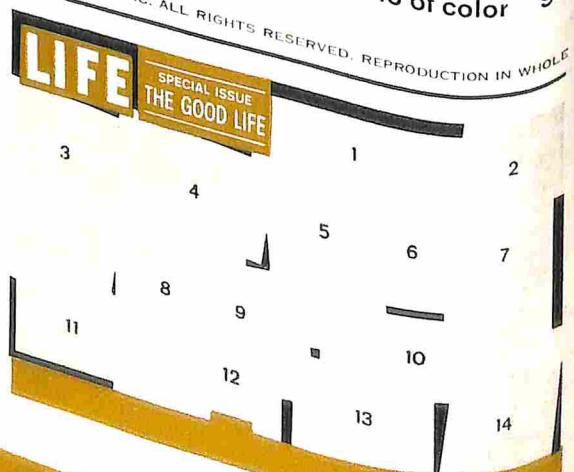
Pure physical fun is a prime outlet for leisure. Name your pleasure and you will find it in the world's busiest arena spectacularly displayed here in a dazzling portfolio of color

96

THE COVER

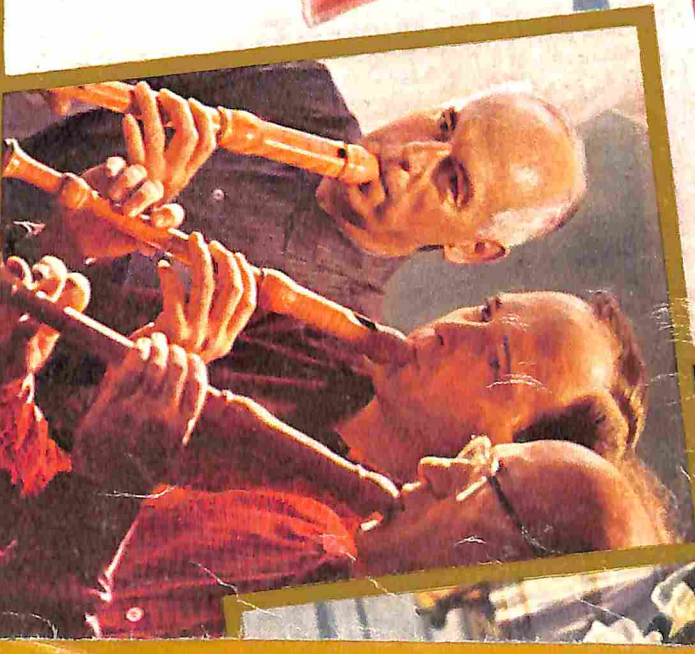
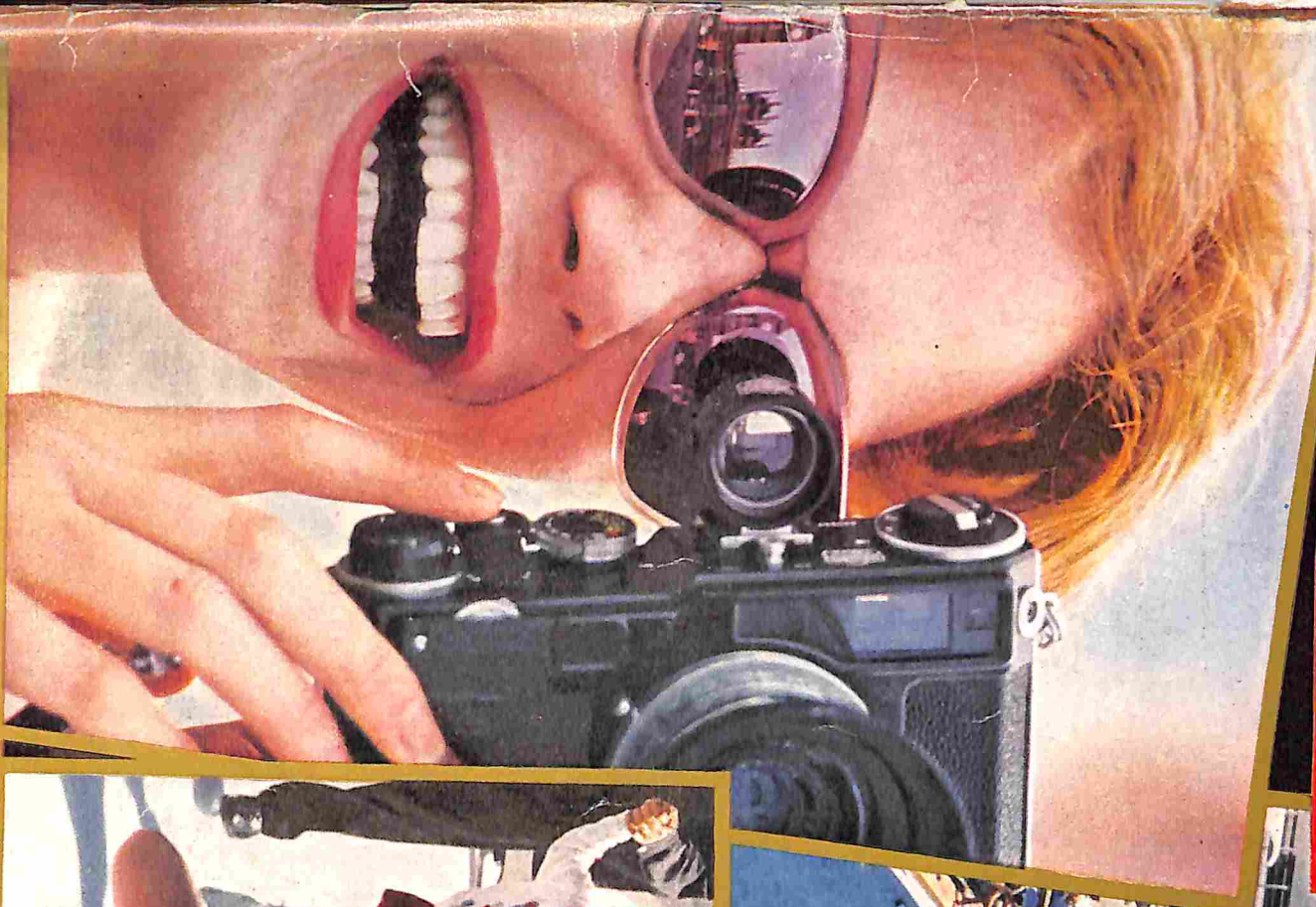
Americans at leisure on LIFE's cover are identified by the key at right. 1 Patrons at Casey's in Limestone, N.Y.; 2 Mrs. Burton Eller in garden of her Denver, Colo. home; 3 Tourist-photographer Gail Gladstone of New York reflecting Big Ben on tour of London; 4 A lifeguard diving into the Fontainebleau pool in Miami Beach; 5 Two members of the square-dancing class on the patio of Western Saddle Club in Phoenix, Ariz.; 6 Jean Mabrey Taylor painting along banks of Mississippi at Vicksburg; 7 Mr. and Mrs. Albert Bayer of Palos Verdes, Calif. heading for Las Vegas on a weekend helicopter hop;

8 Karen Howland, champion amateur figure skater, on Sun Valley, Idaho, outdoor rink; 9 Banker R. Kingston Seibert, Physicist Ashley Carter and Lawyer Ray Hardin playing recorder trio in Short Hills, N.J.; 10 Betsy Boland, 10, of St. Louis ogling a holiday cake; 11 Ralph Jones of New York curling up with a good book; 12 Edward A. Johanson of New York observing stars through homemade telescope; 13 Sol Ebner, thread salesman, sanding a chair in New York's Henry Street Settlement (N.Y.) workshop; 14 Meredith Ogden snoozing in a floating chair in backyard pool at her Atlanta, Ga. home.



LIFE

SPECIAL ISSUE
THE GOOD LIFE



Dec 28 1959
2051 26 1305 1502
NNNN SFLS SHOTWAY
EVERETT HOBBS
1001

SPECIAL TWO-IN-ONE ISSUE 30 CENTS

CIRCULATION MORE THAN 6,500,000 WEEKLY