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The next billionaire?

By Diana Brown
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Andover entrepreneur **Mark Ranalli** has launched an on line business based on community wisdom. Called Helium, Ranalli's website invites visitors to read, write, and review articles written by fellow visitors. Some may wax poetic about pets or financial fine points. Articles are ranked by the readers, and those that get the highest mark rise, like helium, to the top, and earn advertising revenue. His vision: "The wisdom of many outweighs the knowledge of one." Ranalli, a father of two, started BaseSix, a marketing strategy firm that served AT&T Broadband, America Online, Comcast, HBO, and Cox Cable. When he sold the company, BaseSix was earning more than \$12 million in annual revenue and had a staff of 70. Before that, he was president of UNIFI Communications with \$50 million in revenue in its first four years.

MAN OF MANY TALENTS: After growing up in a Kansas home that had no indoor plumbing, it may seem ironic that **Thayne Emrich** is designing the interiors of Concord-area homes. His life has taken many turns. Emrich, who recently opened his namesake design company, studied interior design, interior architecture, apparel design, and even theater design at Kansas State University, and went on to study in Brandeis University's theater program, from which he graduated magna cum laude. From there, his resume lists theater, catering, running a Lancaster bed-and-breakfast, and even a production company and set-design company for Boston-area theaters. But, he said, he believes that all of this comes together in his new business. His work in theater helps him see color and space, and he knows how people socialize because of his work in hospitality.

THE THIRD AGE: **Jacquelyn James** of Belmont teamed up with Wellesley College psychology professor **Paul Wink** to dig into those early-retirement years from age 65 to 79 for their new book, "The Crown of Life: The Dynamics of the Early Post-Retirement Period." James is the director of Boston College's Center for Work and Family Research. The two thought that this time of life, referred to as the Third Age, is often characterized as a gloomy, pre mortality stage or, conversely, as a time of peak personal fulfillment when people unearth long-buried life goals and dreams. They say that it is "a particularly rewarding time for retirees living longer, and healthier, than previous generations." The book looks at how men and women craft their lives in the pre- and post-retirement periods, using surveys and studies to document Americans' choices. Their findings include a slight decline in health, variations of longevity, continued work, and a fear of death increasing with age.

SERIOUS RHYTHM: **Joe Galeota** of Arlington, associate professor of percussion at the Berklee College of Music, will pay tribute to the music and dance of the Ashanti people of Ghana in West Africa at 8:15 tomorrow night in the college's Performance Center. Special guest performers are to include **Victor** and **Emmanuel Agbeli**, who are master Ewe drummers and dancers from Ghana who run the Dagbe Cultural Center there. Many Berklee students have gone to the center to study after Galeota started a three-week program there. "We live in various rural villages and learn their indigenous music and culture," Galeota said of the program. "It's a life-changing experience every year."

HIS MUSE: The Rev. **Ronald E. Ramsey** of Arlington, rector of St. John's Episcopal Church, has released a book, "The Water's Edge: A Collection of Poems." "The poems in this collection mirror three basic themes -- the gift of hope, the mystery of life, and the joy of liberty," he wrote. Last year, Ramsey received an Editor's Choice Award for poetry from the International Library of

Poetry. Ramsey is also the author of "Maiden Voyage: Practical Advice for New Pastors" and "Pastoral Leadership in the Black Church."

NEW LEADER: Paul J. Andrews, chairman of the Winchester Hospital board of directors, is taking up a new post on the Massachusetts Hospital Association's Trustees Care! Committee. The group will serve as a statewide trustee network that fosters trustee community outreach for hospitals and addresses hospital and health care issues in the media and in the Legislature. "Paul will be heading an effort to engage hospital trustees from around the state," **Ron Hollander**, president of the Massachusetts Hospital Association, stated in a release. "These trustees are civic leaders. Paul is perfectly suited to the work of marshaling these important people to bolster the causes of health, wellness, and community involvement. We are excited about this project, and we are very happy to have a leader of Paul's caliber chairing it."

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