

**Dotsie Bregel,
Founder and CEO of
The National Association of Baby Boomer Women
(NABBW)**



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And

**Boomer Women Speak (BWS)
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Presents

**Finding The Perfect Travel Partner, and
Boomers Traveling Safely**

With

Holly Klein and Liz Dahl

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**Finding The Perfect Travel Partner, and
Boomers Traveling Safely
Given by Holly Klein and Liz Dahl**

Dotsie: Hello and welcome to the call. For those of you who don't know me I am Dotsie Bregel, I'm founder of the **National Association of Baby Boomer Women** which can be found at www.NABBW.com and also www.boomerwomenspeak.com and both happen to be the number one sites on major search engines for baby boomer women right now. I'm passionate about educating and empowering boomer women which happens to be my generation. I would also just like to share that our sites are proudly sponsored by www.dolans.com so if you are interested in excellent financial information that will encourage you to live a more financially responsible midlife you can go to www.dolans.com and sign up for their newsletter. We are also sponsored by **Elations** which is a daily drink supplement that offers relief from joint aches and pains and it is an alternative to taking large pills. All you have to do is drink one little jug a day; and you can find them at www.elations.com.

Today we are doing our second call in the series *Girls Just Want to Have Fun*. Last year we surveyed our members to find out what areas of interest were most important to them, and we came up with twelve so each month we focus on a different topic, and this month our topic is travel. Let's get started. We have two people that we are going to interview today and both have founded websites that happen to one, especially for boomer women, and then another one just in general for boomers. So we are going to do this call today, and then we are going to do another one next week with Pat Burns who is the author of

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Grandparents Rock and her topic is going to be traveling with grand kids and she has done a lot of it. That should be a fun call to be on if you have grandchildren and you can travel with them. So let's get started by introducing our first guest who is Holly Klein. Holly are you still there?

Holly: Yes Dotsie I'm here.

Dotsie: If you could speak up just a little that would be great. Holly is a licensed psychotherapist with a limited practice in Kansas and Missouri. She is the founder of www.justusgirlstravel.com, and she has a goal to empower women who have achieved the age of forty to break through to a more full life. Very similar mission to what we have at **NABBW** and **Boomer Women Speak**. The **Just Us Girls Travel** website matches savvy women, forty plus with a like minded travel partner and fulfills the desire for adventure, friendship and community. Her experience as a clinical social worker, both in private practice and hospital work, has created a vast working knowledge to promote wellness in the individual and Ms. Klein's, *Just Ask Holly* column appears monthly in the *Mature Lifestyle* magazine. You also have *Just Ask Holly* on your site too don't you?

Holly: Yes on the very front page. Anyone can come out and read my *Just Ask Holly* letter on a daily basis.

Dotsie: One thing I want to point out is that when I first talked to Holly months ago, she was telling me about her site. I thought it was interesting that the reason she chose to launch it was because she counsels a lot of women at midlife, and learned that a lot of women wanted to travel, but didn't always have someone to travel with. Do you want to tell us a little bit about that Holly?

Holly: Yes, in my practice, I do have quite a number of women in the age group that we serve. I was repeatedly hearing the same things; wanting to make connections, would like to have more of a social life, maybe they have actually left work now and they are trying to figure out how to reinvent themselves. They wanted to travel. Some were married, and their husbands didn't want to travel and some were single. And it was like okay, how can we solve this? Finally it dawned on me that maybe I can help solve this, and I literally started to research and there was nothing out there that would match women-to-women for adventure and travel and the opportunity to see the world or go to that destination they have always wanted to go to. So that's how the idea came about just a little over two years ago.

Dotsie: This is kind of an exciting month for us to do this because we just traveled to Vegas to meet the women in the forums at www.boomerwomenspeak.com. Everyone actually, except me; my husband and son came along and we went a day early as we were celebrating my son's twenty-third birthday, but after that, I split from the guys and hung out with the girls, and all the other girls were traveling alone. It is definitely something that women are interested in doing and really planning ahead to do to.

I just wanted to run through some statistics that make us realize the need for what you are doing. Boomer women that were surveyed, ages 42 to 60, out of all of them, forty one percent were in a long marriage. So that really leaves fifty-nine percent without a spouse to travel with. So that is just something to think about.

I think in the past, a lot of couples traveled together and couples traveled with couples, and actually now that forty-one percent of the women in America are single it is really not the norm that couples are traveling together any more. So a lot of women are traveling solo, and if not solo, with friends or being matched with someone to travel with. So that is one thing that I just wanted to point out.

Holly: I was going to say there are a lot of dual careers right now and women are just getting to the peak of their earnings and it is quite possible that their husband isn't available to travel when they would like to or really doesn't want to go where they would like to. As independent as we have become women are like, I still want to go. What I hear a lot is that women don't want to pay that extra

single supplement just to go and they miss that camaraderie and the fun communication that goes on with someone. I just spoke to a woman who had gone on a cruise last January and she said I went ahead and did it because I didn't have anyone to go with me and she said it was fine but beyond having dinner people at the table to sit and talk to, she said I was really on my own and I kind of missed out on some of the fun of the cruise. So hers wasn't so much money as the fun partnership that you have going on excursions and laughing at things that happen on the ship.

Dotsie: That's a good point. Another thing I wanted to mention is that when women were surveyed about if they could have more time for enjoyment what would they do. These are women age 42 to 60. Fifty eight percent wanted to have time to them selves. Forty-eight percent were interested in traveling. You know what this doesn't make sense Holly, I'm going by your notes; it says they want more time for enjoyment, fifty-eight percent wanted time to themselves, forty-eight for traveling and twenty-two for volunteering. It really doesn't add up, so I'm not sure what those statistics are. Are you familiar with that?

Holly: I do not have the exact numbers in front of me, and I think there were some different categories, and I must have combined it together. What I'm going to say and I'm going to use some of the women, there is a Dr. Carol Orsborn and a Dr. Jimmy Small, and both of them have done a study that kind of perpetuates the thought of I really need more time for myself. Also, it was an amazing amount; almost half did want to travel.

Dotsie: Right, forty-eight percent.

Holly: I believe I probably combined that first one and, *what did you want to do when you have time for yourself* and so that is where I picked up some of the other statistics. That's what I had actually heard that women really wanted to travel so that's how *Just Us Girls Travel* got started. And then as I researched it, I found that some of the other things that were going along is they were really looking for a search for meaning. That was an underlying motivator for the things that they were doing. They were trying to find out what their mission was, what we should do now. That was really a critical piece that came out of the white paper called *Boomer Women and Their Search for Meaning*. That was just the underlying piece, and we have such an opportunity to go from here on. It's like another half of life we get to choose and from this half we can choose how we want to live it. Because when we started out at zero, it was like a preprogrammed plan until we became an adult. And now we are in our wisdom years and we can actually decide who we are, and what we really want to become.

Dotsie: Sure, and you mentioned that we are living longer. In 1900, the average American Woman lived to be 47 years of age, and now we can actually be looking at an extra five decades. This whole midlife thing is a huge transition state, and it's just really exciting that women are interested in using this time and

years ahead of us to do some traveling. I wanted to tell you Dr. Carol Orsborn is a friend of the Association. We did a panel discussion in D.C. in November and it was called, *Boomer Women Who We Are; Where We've Been, and Where We're Going*. And she was the representative on the panel that talked about marketing to boomers. I don't know if you have met her, but she is a delightful woman, just really neat. Have you met her?

Holly: No, we've exchanged emails, but that's it.

Dotsie: Well let's talk a little bit about your site and about women who are interested in using your site and how they can go about it. The first thing is that women recognize that they are not alone. That the majority of women want to travel, don't really want to travel by themselves, and would like to travel with someone else. Tell us how your exclusive travel matching service works.

Holly: Well it works because we have created an in depth questionnaire and for those women out there that have heard of a website called Eharmony; how they start that is by an in depth questionnaire that really takes a look at personality traits, interests, life passions, and that type of thing. So what we have created is our own in-depth questionnaire, and it takes about fifteen to twenty minutes to fill out. It really gets into your travel preferences, personality traits, how you want to travel, whether it's economical, moderate, more on the luxury side, and what time of year you want to go. So it really gets into that, and then matches the personality traits against the other members of the site to find someone who really wants to go where you want to go and travel like you do, and have a personality connection that is really a good one. When they fill this out, they don't have to fill it out all at once if they are short of time, but they can come back and fill in the next section and that puts them in the mix. After they have signed up, they fill out their own profile page which lets their potential matches know about them. They can post their picture, and past trip pictures that they have enjoyed. In my head I'm thinking there are a lot of teachers, a lot of executives, widows that now want to travel, and don't have the opportunity to with a spouse. So you'll find all sorts of women within the site that want to travel.

One of the pieces that we do offer the women on the website, which no one is doing it as well as the matching for women over forty, is we have an additional interest box that is on your profile and you can literally put in golf, tennis, walking, theatre, snow skiing, back packing, or music concerts. The things that you are interested in, you put them in there, and that gives you a whole different internal match because you may find ten women that enjoy doing the same thing that you do. I had one lady call me from New York and we kind of stepped her way through it. We try and make our site really easy, and she wanted to go to L.A. to a conference and she wanted to find someone to go to dinner with while she was there. Then as she was going through the matches of personality and things that she would like to do in California, she found someone that was located there, that was a vegetarian, and she thought that was really interesting. So you can

actually make new connections.

Dotsie: Is the matching done through the computer or are people doing it themselves?

Holly: No it is done by computer; it's a computer program. So it is very in depth and provides really good matches. And as you have matches come in your box, you can go to their page and see how closely they match you because we'll give you a little grid that says there are more compatible here, a little less here, more here, and you can compare them all.

Dotsie: Now one thing that I think we need to mention is that even if you don't want to travel, but you want to go to shows in your city, can you use this?

Holly: Yes and that is where the additional information comes from. If you'd like someone that likes ceramics and would like to take a class, or want to do some of the local things in your city, then you can search by the hobby, or interest that you have, and it will pull the ones up that are close to you in your area. So it's a wonderful opportunity for close connections, as well as, there may be a lady in Canada that would love to go out on a cruise in Florida, and you live in Ohio, and you literally can get together, figure out your cruise dates, and absolutely go and do that. So we have women from around the world that belong to our site and we are strictly a travel matching service we are not a travel agency.

Dotsie: So tell us how that works. You just find a person for someone to travel with and then they go to a travel agency and decide on their trips themselves.

Holly: Absolutely. That is exactly what we do. We will throw the matches and put them in your box, and when you come in and check, you can check out who your matches are. You can read over their profile. We have a confidential internal email, and so until you feel comfortable, you don't give any of your personal information out to anyone else on the site. So we try and keep the safety issue there.

Dotsie: How are you getting the word out about your site?

Holly: Right now we have done some trade shows. We've started out doing that in Florida, and that was received really well. We have been advertising with ***Boomer Women Speak*** and also ***Journey Women*** because so many women like information about where they're going to go and where they can stay, and that has been really successful as well. So that's kind of where we started in October, and it has just been wonderful.

Dotsie: What else does the site have to offer?

Holly: One of the things that we have done knowing that women want to know

more and they want to know more about what their interest are, and we have professionals that have contributed to the site. Articles about Menopause which sneaks up on most of us. In fact, all but fifteen percent kind of skate through that. We'll have articles by professionals whether it is sports medicine, or regular health. We have published authors that also write articles for us that would be of interest, so we have that. We also have two of our live forum chats started. One is the *Spirituality Chat* with Amy Hammond Hagberg who is a published author and speaker. Then I have *The Women Over Forty With Questions About Life* on Tuesdays at 1:00. We also have a newsletter that we can update for everyone every month. So we get the word out that way, and have the women connected.

Dotsie: So it sounds like you're branching out, you're not staying strictly with travel; you're addressing other issues for midlife women also.

Holly: Right, we're trying to address articles that will help people grow and give them more information. Because until menopause hit, I really didn't know much about it because I thought I would be one that would skate through and I didn't. So then we start researching things about ourselves, and about the health of the members of our family. Some times we have spouses that come up with something and we are like wow, we need to know more.

Dotsie: I certainly understand that because of the Association and www.boomerwomenspeak.com. Let me just ask because we're almost out of time before our next guest comes on, do you have any favorite travel books, or sites, that you use? Do you use *Travelocity*, do you use *Triple A*? What do you use for planning trips?

Holly: Well, one of my favorite things to use is—I'm a member of *Triple A*, and I really enjoy getting their book and literally researching the trip before I go. And that way I make sure I know everything I possibly can about the things I really want to go see. So I will use them for that. Then I will book travel online because it is so easy to do and one of the things that I had indicated, eighty percent of us use computers, and seventy percent of online purchases are made by women. So it's the logical next step to get your travel really easily, and when you want to find someone to go with then you really start researching things online, and you can find service out there and we are the one that matches women over forty with other women.

Dotsie: So how about any travel books in particular? Are there any that you use?

Holly: Well one I know that is going to be coming out this fall and it is an update and I believe it's by—I can't think of her last name, but the book has to do with the best deals for women over fifty that you can only get when you are over fifty. She comes out with a new update every year and I know Just Us Girls Travel will be in that update. If the women are over fifty then that would be an excellent

book to look up on Amazon. I highly recommend taking a look at some of those things.

Dotsie: Are you familiar with the magazine *Girl Friend Getaways*, I'm sure you are. There is a magazine called *Girl Friend Getaways* and if you're not familiar with it you should probably correspond with the editor and try to write for it. It's a quarterly magazine, and it's relatively new. I know their spring-summer issue is out now, but it is a really fun magazine. It's mostly about travel and entertaining, a little bit of style and some shopping, but mostly travel. The articles are great. They have lots of recommendations for spas, beach, and they kind of categorize all of the different types of travel that you can do. So there might be an article about ten great Spas, ten great beach vacations to do with girls. It's a really good magazine, and I would recommend it.

Holly: Well, it sounds great to pick up and everyone should do that.

Dotsie: Okay did you have anything else you wanted to add about your site or your service before we move on?

Holly: One quick thing that I would like everyone to know is as a clinical social worker, which is what my actual licensure is, one of the things we want to do is to give back, and on our site, while we're giving 15 days away free now, the monthly membership is \$14.95, and the first \$10.00 of your initial membership will go to Oprah's Angel Network. So you feel like you are a part of something greater. Then at some point in the future, ten percent of our profit will go into a foundation where the women can literally make nominations of where it needs to go, and then they'll vote on what areas that they want to be a part of and help in. So it's a way for them to really reach out and maybe they can't go far at home, but they can when they're with *Just Us Girls Travel*.

Dotsie: Tell us again, there is a fee to join?

Holly: There is a \$14.95 membership fee and they get fifteen days free right now if they want to come out and try it, and put their questionnaire in, and see the responses, and take a more serious look at the site inside they can for free. Then we have a minimal membership fee to allow them to continue to use it for all their trips, all the connections that they want to make locally, and then a portion of it then goes to that reaching out piece that I think is so important.

Dotsie: That sounds good. Thank you for that information. Now I just want to ask, this teleseminar, there are some people listening now, but the majority of people listen like when we send the links around, or when it's archived on the member's only section of our site. So is that fifteen-day free, is that offer always there, or is it just for these next fifteen days? I just want to make that clear.

Holly: No, it is always there. In fact, if they would go right out to the site, there is

a banner that says that right there across the bottom to join us free for fifteen days, and they can do that, take part in what we're doing, and see if it fits them and it sure has fit a lot of women that we have spoken with. So invite them to try it. That's one of the best things you can do is try something and then decide if it's for you.

Dotsie: And you know what, you send us something for our newsletter that says you can try it for fifteen days free.

Holly: Okay.

Dotsie: Sure for the member new section. Okay Holly, do you have anything else you would like to share.

Holly: Not right off hand, I know we're kind of short on time. I want to thank you for inviting me to come on with you, and invite everyone to come out, and we would love to have them.

Dotsie: You want to give your web address again?

Holly: It's www.justusgirlstravel.com and if they would like to get our newsletter, they can sign up just for the newsletter on the front page.

Dotsie: Okay that sounds great. Thank you and I'm just hoping that Liz is on the call.

Liz: I am. I have been enjoying the conversation.

Dotsie: Probably all very familiar isn't it?

Liz: It is, in fact Holly, I'll be probably be in touch with you because so many people have emailed us that very question, like why don't we have a singles category to pair people together as far as traveling and not having to pay the single supplement, so I'll be in touch.

Dotsie: That's good. You know it's funny because last month the women who talked about entrepreneurship ended up—the few teleseminar leaders that we had, ended up meeting each other, and are networking too, so that's good. I'm glad to hear that you'll be in touch.

Liz: Well, that's what it's all about.

Dotsie: This is Liz Dahl and Liz is the founder of www.boomeropia.com and let me just tell you a little bit about Liz, and then Liz is going to talk to us about safety when traveling as a single boomer women, and she is also going to tell us about her site. So Liz Dahl Enterprises was formed in 1984 and has been serving

clients in Louisville and nationally since that time. Liz's prior experience was in business, politics, and entertainment. That's quite a mix isn't it?

Liz: It is all-together, trust me.

Dotsie: She started her first company which happened to be a travel agency when she was in her early thirties. And then she was approached by Phyllis George who is the former Miss America and future first lady of Kentucky, to become her chief of staff and press secretary. After that, she was also named the head of the Kentucky Film Foundation, which I think is really interesting and I want to talk to you about that at some point. It was during that tenure that she became involved with the media on a national level. After the administration ended, Liz went on to form her own PR firm which was Liz Dahl Enterprises, and she has been involved in this industry ever since. Her clients have been varied and they are sometimes unusual, but it has always been interesting and successful.

Liz's track to the United States was a difficult one and I find this very interesting. Her father was in a concentration camp, and she was born in a displaced person's camp in Germany, and then her family came to America on a cargo ship from Europe. Liz keeps a photo of that journey on her desk as a regular reminder of her past, and opportunities that have been made available to her in this country. In fact, she is currently working on a movie about her parents love story. In January of 2008, she co-founded Boomeropia. So this is a relatively new site. Boomeropia is a travel website for people fifty and over. She launched it out of the frustration of not being targeted to appeal to her fun side because after turning fifty, her mailbox was always full of hearing aid ads, drug company information, burial plots, and laxatives. So having owned her own travel agency at one time, she went back to her passion, which is so typical of women at midlife, I just love this story, and she has now combined her knowledge and love of travel with her professional PR skills. Because we know you have to have some PR skills to have a website. So in these few months of being in existence, Boomeropia is doing quite well with its traffic. So welcome to the call.

Liz: Thank goodness. Yes, thank you Dotsie, thank you so much for making me aware of your wonderful organization, and thank you so much for inviting me to be part of this teleconference-seminar. I think it's fabulous what you are doing, and I think it's wonderful always bringing people together, and networking, because that's really what it's all about. The men have been doing it for years and years and years, and women have been so slow to figure out the process, but thanks to organizations like yours, you are making things better for all us.

Dotsie: Well thanks. Tell us a little more about your website, and spell it out for us so people know it, and then we'll get on with some of the safety things.

Liz: Absolutely. www.boomeropia.com is exactly what it may sound like to you.

It's a combination of boomer and utopia so the utopias of travel destinations combined with boomers, Boomeropia. Travel for baby boomers. This is not just for women, it's for men and women, but as Holly pointed out, you know, women do most of the buying whether it's online or in retail stores, you know, they make most of the buying decisions period. So one of the things that I found having owned a travel agency, and being approached, even though I was doing PR, many of my friends were still calling me about booking travel because I kept my hand in it just because it was a passion, and I wanted to stay in touch and enjoy and know all the wonderful travel options that were out there. I was finding that the reason these people were calling me, and most of them were my age, was because they didn't really know anything beyond the normal things they saw on TV, and as most of us know the coveted demographic for advertisers on TV is 18 to 49. Well that leaves out 88 million people; that's how many boomers there are, or somewhere in there. I'm not sure if that is the exact number, but that's the number I have been using.

So I found that we weren't being targeted for that. We were being targeted for those things I told you that I got in my mailbox all the time. Which were the hearing aid ads, and the burial plot ads and the laxatives and the pharmaceuticals. Not to say that those things aren't going to be necessary at some point in time, but that is something that wasn't targeting my fun side, and I just wasn't relating to it at all. I said I need to find something to target the fun side and let a lot of these people fifty and older know that there are so many other options out there, but they are just not being told about them.

Dotsie: Sure and if I could just mention like some of the sub topics on your website because I think it's really well done. There are actually some links for people who are handicapped. I have a friend whose husband is handicapped, and it's nice to know that there is a place to look that can tell you what places are really handicap accessible.

Liz: And did you see how many wonderful options there were?

Dotsie: Yeah, there were like five pages I think, or something. There are quite a few. Then there is also a grandparent's tab which is good for letting you know about trips for taking the grandchildren or family travel. And there are typical things like cruises, and bus tours. But another one that I think is kind of cool is the concert button which tells you about most of the concerts are boomer concerts you know, that appeal to us.

Liz: Exactly and you know there is also shopping.

Dotsie: Right, there is also shopping, and then of course there is the Spa, which you would expect. Some of the things are not what you would find on a typical travel website because it's all broken down by categories.

Liz: Yes there are thirty categories, from adventure to volunteer. You know volunteer is something that is very big, especially in people in our age group. They want to make a difference, and they have the time, and they would like to have something else to do besides just maybe go on shopping excursions, or tours, although we still we want to do things, but you know those things are fabulous. And there is learning. Did you look at that particular category?

Dotsie: You know I don't think I did.

Liz: I think to me this is one of my favorite categories because there are some wonderful opportunities out there to learn various things. It's a little different from volunteer in that you can learn. One of the first things in my category is called *Creative Pattern and the Muse*. And this is a woman named Laurie Doctor who teaches workshops in painting, drawing, calligraphy, book making in a contemplative setting. So that's fabulous for people, especially for women I think that would be of great interest. We have nature photography workshops.

Dotsie: So you actually take a trip and if you are interested in learning about how to photograph nature, there is a specific place to visit on the trip, is that what you mean?

Liz: Exactly. There are lecture vacations and they offer at each destination, a variety of subjects from music, to history, to politics, to philosophy, to senior-related topics, to world studies, to religion or anything to enrich your life.

Dotsie: Very cool. Anything else about the site, do you have a newsletter?

Liz: We do not have a newsletter, but we do have an area called "share your travel experiences." I would love for people to go and look at that and especially to add to that for us. There is a posting that is so hysterical in here in our South and it is posted by a woman that calls herself the 'goddess of the glitter.' And it is called a *Long Week in Hollywood, Florida*. And I think anyone who has made a trip like this will so relate to it. You know boomers are fabulous, especially women, because I think most but not all the contributors in the forums are women but most of them are, and they are so happy and eager to share their experiences, and what they have learned. And you know we learn from them as much as we give them information. That is one of the things about my site, it is not a booking site, it is an information site. So what we do is we research places, and then we put them within the category that they fit, and then we give you a little description about it, and then we link you directly to their website, so you can go and you can spend hours just looking at all of these different places. Once you see them, you can either call your travel agent if you are more comfortable doing that. You can absolutely do nothing at all about it. You can just put it aside for future reference. You can book online, or whenever possible we provide a phone number so you have an actual person you can talk to and that is completely separate from us; we don't get involved in the booking at all. We sell

you ideas, and what you do with them is up to you.

Dotsie: Is there a fee for your site?

Liz: Absolutely not.

Dotsie: So it's a free site.

Liz: Yes, just go on and enjoy. We have travel tips, and we have added and I'm so excited about this, if people will wait another week or so, we will have the first run of her tips. I happen to have a friend that I was in an International Protocol class with and she went on to do that for a living. Her name is Diane Diehl, and she is not only a boomer, but she is a flight attendant. She went back to another profession when her last child went away to school, which was at the age of fifty, and she signed up to be a flight attendant. She has been flying internationally ever since and she is now 60. So she is going to be providing insider travel tips from a boomer flight attendants perspective.

Dotsie: Well, let me ask you this, if you don't have a newsletter, how do you capture email addresses? Just because I have a couple websites, and I'm thinking how do you do this?

Liz: We have email updates so there is a spot on our site that says "get Boomeropia updates." So if you send us your email then every time we add new content or new features, we will send you an email.

Dotsie: Okay, how often is that because people like to know that when they sign up.

Liz: Well right now, it is whenever we can get to it.

Dotsie: Well, I mean is it once a month, or once a week, or four times a week?

Liz: It would probably at this time be about twice a month.

Dotsie: That's reasonable, that's good.

Liz: And we're only three months old.

Dotsie: Very good. Let's talk about women, and traveling, and safety, and that kind of thing. You mentioned that it's important to tap into your intuition. Do you want to tell us a little bit about that?

Liz: Right, you know women are certainly well known for their intuition, and don't ever discount that because if something doesn't feel right to you, it probably isn't. Now it's not in 100% of the cases but some times you're traveling alone, and you

feel like somebody may be following you and you think oh, it's just my imagination. You know what; err on the side of caution, and think that maybe somebody is, and if you feel that way don't go directly to your room. Go back downstairs, get into some sort of group setting, or stop at the front desk and make mention of the fact that you think someone is following you, or someone has been rattling your doorknob, or whatever. If it doesn't feel right to you, if it feels a little funny I say just tap into it. If there is nothing there, there is nothing there, and that's fine. But if there is something there, you have just averted a possible disaster.

Dotsie: Sure, it's the whole better safe than sorry. Actually, this reminds me of just last week when we were in Vegas and I had to go from one hotel to another by myself, and it was ten or eleven o'clock at night. I wanted to walk. They are like, you really need to take a cab, and there was a long line for the cab. So I just thought oh for gosh sakes, I really didn't think anything would happen to me because it is so crowded on the strip there, but I just jumped in a cab. But I guess it is always better to follow your intuition.

Liz: Just follow your intuition. And that is always good, the cab whatever it cost, it was worth it.

Dotsie: Right, that's right. Well this isn't so much about safety, but how about packing?

Liz: I'll tell you what, this has helped me so often, Dotsie, and that is to create a packing list. You only have to do it once and in fact, on our site we give you a link to a site to travel tips. If you go to travel tips, there is a clothes/packing, and it's what to pack and you click on that and it directs you right to a website that creates a comprehensive packing list for you. So you just click on it, and then you can print it out.

Dotsie: And then just check it off as you go along.

Liz: It's not only just about what to pack, but it's things like arranging for pet and plant care, don't forget to turn down your thermostat, lock your windows, stop routine deliveries, reminds you to take your necessary documents with you, whether it's a passport, or cash and credit cards. Things that you think are obvious but some times when you are in a rush, you know how it is. You've got twenty things going on. If you are still working you've got all of that you are trying to get done. You always put yourself last, and the things that are so important, you forget. It's not so bad when you are traveling in our own country, but when you go out of the country, if you end up in Paris and you needed a pair of boots, you are not going to find a Wal-Mart to just run in and get a cheap pair. So be sure and pack all of those things. This comprehensive packing list is wonderful. Like I said, all you have to do is print it out and what applies and what doesn't doesn't. It reminds you to take everything from Kleenex, to Q-tips, to deodorant.

And those are important things to remember.

Dotsie: Sure, and you know you mention the day that you are packing and the day before you go on a trip, those are some of my most stressful days because I'm always trying to tie things up with work, tie things up with home, make sure I talk to Dad, get the bills paid, make sure the trash is out, make sure all the windows are locked, and it goes on and on. It's just exhausting.

Liz: And you're last! Women always put themselves last so you have something like this that just reminds you of every little thing. It's like, oh gosh thank goodness I remember about stopping the newspaper. And always leave an itinerary with someone.

Dotsie: Good idea.

Liz: Leave one of those behind, whatever you're doing so someone always knows, you know, you're not heard from, it's like oh gosh I can't remember, she was going to New York, but I don't know what hotel she was staying at. Someone always needs to have that information handy.

Dotsie: And it's something that cell phones have really come in handy with.

Liz: Right, and that's on that packing list.

Dotsie: I can't imagine before the days of cell phones how stressful it probably was.

Liz: Absolutely.

Dotsie: You also have a tip about booking flights in the morning, why is that because I've never heard that.

Liz: Oh my gosh, if at all possible, because once there is a delay, the further in the day that you are, the longer your delay is. And it is not to say that one hundred percent of the time every morning flight is going to take off on time. But you have a much better chance of making it to your destination on the same day that you plan on going if you book the morning flights. And this is particularly true in the summer time because there are so many pop up showers that come up in the summer, and those usually happen in the afternoon. When you follow those weather patterns for years you find that, that can delay flights, and then here you are, you are taking a 4:00 p.m. flight which now becomes 6:00, 8:00 or maybe not at all. And that's because of the showers. And then of course, if it backs up in one section of the country it's just like a domino affect. If at all possible try to book the first flights in the morning, because you have a better chance of getting to your destination the same day.

Dotsie: I like that thinking back on it, we typically do that just to get the most out of the day, but I never really thought about it for any other reason.

Liz: You're right, it's a domino affect, and it can really ruin your trip.

Dotsie: You also talk about getting duped by foreign men and I would have to say not just foreign men, but men in this country too.

Liz: Exactly, oh my gosh, I have stories and I'm sure you have and I'm sure we have all heard them. A lot of women who have been single for a while and let's face it we know how hard it is as a single person, and the older you get, the harder it is. So you go some place fun on vacation, your defenses are down, and you know these guys know that you may have a little bit of cash because you might be a little older, and you might have a little more cash, and you are maybe a little lonesome, so they are going to approach you and you know, it sounds good and you end up in a situation some times that is not so great. So just kind of, even though it sounds like common sense, try to think that maybe these people don't have the best intention, and I should really pay attention to this. If you want to have some fun, have some fun, but leave it behind. A lot of them end up with the men asking them for money and they give them these sob stories, and they send money to these guys. They just prey on their loneliness and they come home with diseases. It's crazy but it does happen a lot, an awful lot.

Dotsie: When I think of women traveling alone I know just this past weekend when we were all in Vegas, there was one gal who was staying in a room by herself, and this man was pursuing her throughout the evening, sent our table drinks, asked her to slow dance, and I had to leave, I said to the other woman, you make sure she gets to her room alright because you just never know. You have to be so careful.

Liz: You do, it's just use your head. I'm not saying that every person has a bad intention; but just use your head. Don't put your head on vacation too. What applies at home, what you wouldn't do at home; you probably shouldn't do somewhere else.

Dotsie: But you know what, people do. They feel like they are on vacation and they just let loose, and it's probably not always a good idea.

Liz: That's part of the fun of vacation is because you do have fun. Dance and have a few drinks and do all of that but what you probably wouldn't do at home; you shouldn't do when you are out of town as well.

Dotsie: Especially, I would think.

Liz: Yeah, especially then.

Dotsie: You mentioned the little tag that hangs on the door that says clean my room; tell me about that because I've never heard that before either.

Liz: That's just an advertisement saying that you are not in your room. The "Do Not Disturb" sign is fine because that just means you want to sleep in and you are in the room. That's usually okay. But when you put that clean my room, or whatever it says, the opposite of do not disturb, if there is a thief around, he or she will know that you are not in your room so that is a safe time to get in there whatever way they know how. It's just not good to advertise that your room is empty. So if you have slept in and then you get up and you leave later, and say you're gone for three or four hours and your room is still not clean, just call housekeeping and ask them to come and clean your room. But do not advertise that there is no one in your room.

Dotsie: With the same thought; those tags probably should never be used because if you have a "Do Not Disturb," then it means you are in the room and what if they know you are alone?

Liz: Well that's true too but it's really not as much of a sign, because mostly it's to let people know that you are not in the room and it's mostly about thieves. If you are not comfortable putting out "Do Not Disturb," that's fine too. But don't ever put out the opposite of "Do Not Disturb."

Dotsie: Now we talked about this earlier because we had Holly on the call but we're going to talk about traveling companions a little bit. Tell us what you can about that.

Liz: Well, you know I find that can also be a nightmare scenario. Whether it's male or female. How many times have you gone on a trip with someone and you thought oh my gosh, never again. Even if you're matched up on a computer, you just never know. The person may sleep in, or they may be sloppy and you're not, whatever it is that bugs you. It's always a chance when you are traveling with someone you don't know. It's even a chance when you are traveling with someone you do know if you have never traveled with them before.

Number one is have patience and understanding; that's the first thing. But I think if you reach out in your own community, outside of joining Holly's organization, if you just within your own community, put yourself out there a little bit. Because let's face it, you can't just expect somebody to just fix it for you or make it happen for you. Get out there. If you are someone who loves museums, or that sort of thing, join one of the museums, and they always have events, and you meet people through those events, and some of them are obviously sharing the same interest that you do, or a dance group, or whatever your interests are. Go ahead and join some sort of community organization and chances are, you will find other people that like the same thing that you do and maybe are looking for someone to travel, with or do things with. Not just travel, just hang out, or go out

to dinner with, that sort of thing. But look what is in your own community because some times it's right under your nose, and you don't do it.

Dotsie: We have a local group of women and they are not just boomers, but a lot of the women are boomers; and they have started a social event a month. It's a networking group, but now they think kayaking, they have movie night, they have gone dancing, and I just think that because so many women at midlife are single, or don't feel like watching sports all the time, or hanging out with their husband all the time, and they may even have good marriage, but they are just interested in things that their spouse isn't.

Liz: Talk to your hairdresser, they know everybody. They know everything about everyone. You just never know where it is. Don't overlook your own backyard.

Dotsie: Right, and that's one of the things I like about these teleseminars is because they do empower women to do something. But this is just empowering us to consider trying something new, whether it's traveling, or something in the neighborhood, or the community, etc. Our health teleseminars really empower women to consider their health, and try to be healthier and live a healthier life style, etc. So to me it's all about empowering women no matter what the topic is.

Liz: Absolutely, don't ever be afraid. Put yourself out there, and worse case scenario, somebody says no, okay so what? On to the next. That is nothing to be afraid of. I think women handle rejection probably better than men. I also sent you some information about dining alone. Don't be afraid to dine alone. I remember I was in Italy one time, and I was traveling with a friend. Now here was a situation where I knew this person, and we were great friends, but we found out in our traveling, we were really not that compatible, and we literally went our own ways at some point in Italy. It happens. So I thought, well I'm not ruining my trip, and so I went on, and I was staying at Villa D'Este on Lake Como which was just absolutely fabulous. So I was eating alone, and sure enough, these lovely people at the next table they embraced me, the most wonderful people from Los Angeles; I am still in touch with them. We went and did all kinds of things together. So just don't let a situation ruin your trip. If it's something you want to do, go and do it, and many times if you're dining alone, you might be surprised at who might approach you or send over a drink or whatever, again use your head. But it could just be a group of people that are traveling together, that see and say hey are you okay, or what's going on?

Dotsie: Well let me just ask before we open up and see if anybody has any questions. Do you have any favorite travel books or travel sites for bookings, and getting good deals, or anything like that?

Liz: Well, www.boomeropia.com I think is one of the best ones, but other than that you know one of my favorite guys is Rick Steves. He is on PBS, and he mostly does Europe, but he has wonderful guidebooks, and he is terrific. He has

great programs, and he was an educator so his books are very educational as well as entertaining. He is very precise about his information so I really love him, I love to watch him, and I love to read his books.

Dotsie: Okay, anything else, or any other websites for booking inexpensive hotels, or airfare, or anything like that?

Liz: You know I think they are all about the same. I have tried because I used to own a travel agency, so I have tried every way to look at it. What I do is I go to all the different websites for hotel, or air, and just which has the best deals. But I will caution you; when you book hotels online be very, very careful because if there is, say you go to the hotel's website and the hotel is like \$300 a night but you go to XYZ website and that room is like \$55 a night. There is usually something missing from that price, and it will be in little print like a cleaning fee. I just read something today where someone wrote in and they got a really great deal online at a hotel. And after they got their bill there was a \$166 dollar cleaning fee added which was more than the price of the room. Now it said in fine print that you will be assessed a cleaning fee, it didn't say how much. So be very careful if it seems too good to be true, it usually is.

Dotsie: Okay, so they get you one way or the other.

Liz: Exactly. When you call a hotel, call them direct, and ask for their best rate. What is the best rate you have available? They won't give it to you unless you ask for it; so be sure and ask for it.

Dotsie: And then also, *AARP* offers discounts too.

Liz: And *Triple A*, *AARP*. You've got some extra time so do your homework. Go on my site, or when you are booking air, hotels directly without booking a tour or something, check them all out. They all have toll free numbers; call them, and talk to people.

Dotsie: It's so much easier now with the Internet.

Liz: Absolutely, absolutely. I just want to empower women and boomers to know that there are other wonderful trips out there beside the things that you are just seeing on TV.

Dotsie: And you can find them by category at www.boomeropia.com. Let's see does anybody on the call have any questions, and some times people don't. Some times it takes a couple seconds for someone to get the nerve to ask a question. Do you have a question for Holly, or Holly do you have a question, or does anybody have a question before we sign off here?

Liz: I would just want to let Holly know that I would like to chat with her because

like I said, when we launched our site, one of the things that we got were, you don't have a single's category. I did that on purpose because we didn't really just want to become like a social networking site, and I didn't want to have that responsibility of pairing people up. But I always email everyone if there is something that we find reputable, we'll definitely make sure they know about it.

Holly: One thing I might mention Liz, I've had that experience myself where I went with my best friend to go skiing and it about killed us both. So what we do is, in part of the questionnaire it literally says, are you an early riser. Are you sloppy, are you neat, so we really give that one piece; you know, are you a smoker, are you a drinker, you know what level. All of those really important pieces that you want to know about somebody traveling. If they are adventurous, if they want more structure, so it's really an in depth questionnaire.

Liz: That's great because you see it happens to all of us.

Dotsie: It sounds like the questions they ask the kids when they are looking for a college roommate.

Liz: Well, that's good.

Dotsie: Very similar.

Liz: That's wonderful. That's a fun subject that's for sure. We all like to travel and I want to encourage people to keep traveling, and keep having fun, and think of us for ideas.

Dotsie: Okay, anything else to say, either of you before we sign off.

Liz: Thank you for the opportunity, Dotsie, and great work for putting together all of these fabulous women.

Dotsie: You're welcome and why don't you say your websites one more time.

Liz: I'm Liz Dahl with www.boomeropia.com.

Holly: I'm Holly Klein with www.justusgirlstravel.com.

Dotsie: Sounds good. Thank you all very much for being on the call and we'll be in touch have a great day.