

# CROSS FROM SIN



**IT'S NEVER TOO LATE TO TRY** something new.

After 30 years working as a casino-pit boss in Sin City (Las Vegas), Dottie Cross felt her life was spiraling out of control. She found reprieve by climbing up Half Dome's Cable Route.

"Climbing saved my life," Cross says, recalling the years she spent dealing cards, drinking and partying. "Otherwise I'd still be in Vegas."

Undeterred by a late introduction to the sport, Cross, then 45, devoted herself to climbing and quickly became a Red Rocks regular.

In 2004, at age 57, while her peers were playing golf or visiting time-shares, Cross downsized her life to fit into a 30-foot-long fifth-wheel trailer.

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**I WANT TO KEEP CLIMBING INTO MY 70S."**

Her friends and family were stunned.

"Working at the MGM Casino was everything you could want in a job: great pay, great benefits," she says. "Everyone thought I was absolutely nuts." But Cross, confident in her dreams (and ability to handle the biggest rig she'd ever driven), hit the road, establishing a routine that includes stints at City of Rocks, where she works as a campground host, Smith Rocks and El Potrero Chico.

Cross shares her fifth-wheel trailer with a motley crew of dogs—who comprise another of her passions. Last year, she orchestrated the opening of a veterinary clinic in El Potrero, her winter home.

In 2007, Cross, who just turned 60, ticked a number of 5.11s in El Potrero, including *Fat Boy Slim* (5.11b).

"I don't care if it's 5.7 or 5.11," she says. "I don't climb hard, I climb fun. I want to keep climbing into my 70s."

An unconventional and generous spirit has garnered her quite a following. Climbers constantly visit her rig to chat and get personalized line-ups of recommended climbs.

"I could die [happily] tomorrow," she says, her tone mixed with confidence and peace. "My life has surpassed anything I could have ever expected."