



TECHNOLOGY

Every day we hear about new technologies. Two-thirds of Americans own a smart phone; many of us have mastered texting, navigating, calendars, checking email and finding information. There is so much more available to us.

Tools are evolving so rapidly that just as I think I've mastered one, another replaces it. I think I'm not alone in my frustration when an update is released and familiar navigating tools are rearranged. Most of us who are over 40 don't find digital navigation to be intuitive, and I know I drive the PSRC help team crazy when I ask for step-by-step instruction. But I'm curious, and I keep trying.

Many are tempted to jump off the tech wagon and return to paper and pencil. I have several friends who found the "digital divide" to be the deciding factor in choosing to retire, as employers implemented a new database, digital record keeping, phone system, etc. And yet, the world keeps changing, with ever more transactions becoming digital, creating a greater potential for leaving people behind.

This year, PSRC's fall conference is called **"Bringing the World to You Through Technology."** We want to introduce you to several tools that can be used to make life easier and help you age in place. For example:

- Online banking makes it possible to track your account at your convenience.. Want to know if your Social Security check was deposited? Does someone help you with bill paying? This tool will help.
- Online shopping can help those who no longer drive but want to continue to prepare fresh food at home, or buy a new sweater, or perhaps you want to send a wedding present to your grandson and his partner.
- Digital books allow you to read a book on any device. You can check them out from the library from your ereader or a phone app from home or while you're on vacation.
- Most organization bulletins now arrive electronically. You can increase the font to read them in large-print.
- You probably need to go online to make travel arrangements: air, hotel, car, event registration.
- Ride services are increasingly available for door-to-door service for smartphone users.

- The internet holds an amazing wealth of information about anything you want to know: What's the best treatment for the pain in your back? What is the FreeB schedule? How does Medicare rank the rehabilitation facilities in the area? Check our website (princetonsenior.org) for activities each week, the latest helpful Computer Guru article and area resources.
- Streaming audio and video can bring almost any movie, tv show or music to you when you want. You can invite friends over to watch streamed videos of popular movies, opera performances and Broadway shows.
- There are digital devices that monitor your health, and can even transmit data to a healthcare practitioner. Apps (short for "applications") can help you track a wandering loved one, and emergency response buttons can work through your mobile phone when you're away from home.
- Safe home technologies include smoke and CO2 detectors, night lights that go on when you move, auto-shutoff for stoves, door monitors and more.

We know that isolation and loneliness are increasing risks with age and reduced mobility. Technology can keep us connected across town or at a distance. I find that Skype video calls with my sons make me feel much more connected than phone calls, and Facebook is great for staying connected with family, friends, communities (and funny videos). Learn about interesting subjects through TED talks. Caregivers can connect to online support groups they can access at any time of day or night and find lots of other helpful information.

PSRC is dedicated to improving your awareness and comfort with using technology. We hope you will attend the conference, sign up for free computer classes, and bring your device for one-to-one help in our computer lab.

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