

Techwit: Some gadgets to consider for geezers

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The best thing about turning 50 is that you can tell jokes about old people and get away with it.

(<http://>)

Techwit By Jason Ohler

However, rest assured that I would never ridicule the venerable demographic to which I now belong. In fact, let me take a serious moment to wax philosophical about how I hope I meet my own demise. The philosopher Emo Philips put it best when he said, "I want to die peacefully in my sleep like my grandfather. Not screaming and yelling like the passengers in his car."

Growing older has made me think about the kinds of technology I hope to have in my sunset years and what a growth industry senior technology could be. Here are a few gizmos I hope will be around when I



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need them in the not too distant future.

The heart and soul of my future technology arsenal will be a walker that's connected to a satellite tracking system. Known affectionately as "Where's Grandpa?", this new breed of walker will allow my loved ones to know where I am at all times. This not only gives them peace of mind, but it also allows them to control my behavior from afar, just like the ankle bracelets worn by criminals. Mild shocks will be applied should I wander into a bar before noon. Lawrence Welk music will emanate from speakers mounted on the handle bars as I leave. A small computer screen will show me the route to the nearest bingo game.

My way-cool walker will have the same kind of "tip over detection" that space heaters use. And certainly we can expect interactive walkers that we can dance with, even talk to. The "talker walker" will allow me to talk to myself and have a sympathetic though synthetic audience. Friends and family will rejoice because they won't have to listen to me whine anymore about how difficult life was when computers were slow and a hard drive was something you did in a '57 Chevy.

In fact, there are enough gadgets for geezers waiting to be invented to fill an entire Sharper Image catalog. Like a wristwatch that broadcasts the Weather Channel all day. How about large print Palm Pilots? True, using them could be slow going because the screen will only be able to show one word a time. But hey, when I'm retired all I've got is time. And who says I have to have blue hair just because I'm old? I look forward to Selsun Pink and Green, even if I am wearing a toupee. While I'm on the topic of fashion, I think I'll take advantage of my sagging skin and go for some of that body piercing that sets off airport security alarms, as long my cardiologist doesn't think I'm overexciting myself. And while I'm venting, why is my age group being left out of the video game world? Three game titles come to mind that people my age would love to have: Shuffle Board Warrior; Filling out a Florida Presidential Ballot, and Pills, Pills, Who's Got My Pills?

I gotta' go. My pacemaker just sent my cell phone a message telling me it was time for my nap. But before I nod off I want to thank AARP, the official welcoming committee of the aging, who gave me a jingle on the Internet the day I turned 50. I don't how they found me, but shortly thereafter the ads for Viagra, Caribbean cruises and bargain rate dentures just kept coming. You've probably heard the old saying, if you don't think anyone cares about you just try not paying your rent. Well, if you really want to

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get someone's attention, just try turning 50.

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