

Sunny View Retirement Community Opens Doors to Residents Through the iPad
Residents embrace technology as a social networking device

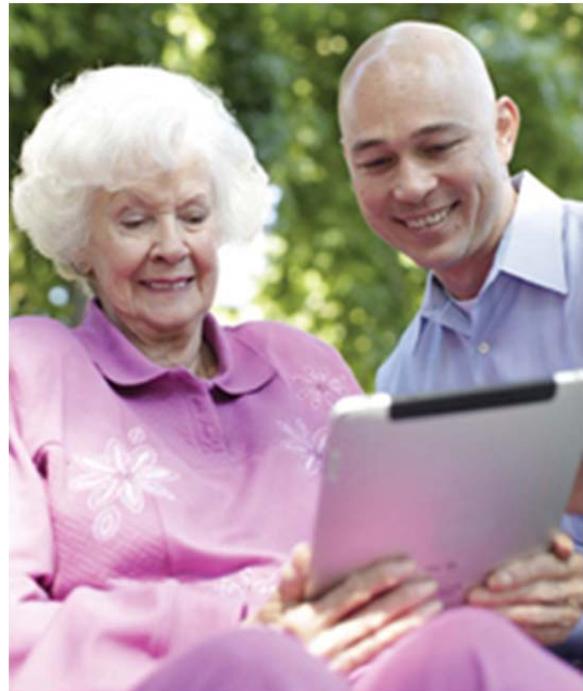
Emerging technology has been called many things by many people, but if Sunny View resident Ruth Hutton could choose just one word to describe the Apple iPad 2 it would be “magic.”

“Not really of course, but it sure felt that way when I used it to see my great granddaughter for the first time using Skype,” Ruth said with amazement. “It was wonderful when I saw her face all the way from Denver. It’s just been fabulous.” Ruth, an Illinois native has friends and family living throughout the US and the iPad 2 lets her keep in touch in more ways than one.

“I’m from a small town called Danville, so I read my hometown paper, the *Danville Commercial News*, using the iPad,” she said. “And of course I keep in touch with my daughter in Saratoga, California through email and soon I hope to be Skyping with my granddaughter in Minneapolis.”

Technologies like the iPad 2 and smart phones have been adapted for senior use in a number of practical ways such as medication management and in-home monitoring by organizations like Front Porch’s Center for Technology Innovation and Wellbeing, a non-profit organization that works with technology and university partners to research and test technologies to meet needs of older adults and improve wellbeing. But groups like the Front Porch Center also realize the social impact that devices like the iPad can have by opening up whole new worlds for older adults by keeping them socially connected to friends and family or as a resourceful tool for entertainment, wellbeing and lifelong learning.

“For me, it’s all about friends and family,” said Lee Marlowe a Sunny View assisted living resident. “My friends and I exchange information about family and sometimes we swap a joke or two. I’m in a wheelchair now but I used to be quite active. The iPad



Sunny View resident Lee Marlowe enjoys using the iPad.

allows me to visit and re-visit places all around the world through the Internet.” Ruth and Lee are just two of several Sunny View residents and a growing number of older adults who have embraced the iPad’s technology thanks to a series of educational classes offered at the retirement community.

The iPad's intuitive interface makes it appealing to older adults. According to the *Pew Internet & American Life Project* from an article on the Leading Age web site ...

- 30% of individuals age 75-plus go online; 58% of people age 66 to 74 do so
- Among Internet users age 75-plus, 88% use e-mail, as do 90% in the 66-74 age group
- 33% of age 65-plus Internet users visit social networking sites, as of May 2011, up from 26% a year earlier (65% of Online Adults Use Social Networking Sites).
- 6% of age 65-plus Internet users use Twitter, as of May 2011, compared to a 13% usage rate for all adults.

While these numbers are not staggering for those 65-plus, the numbers seem to be growing particularly among the Baby Boom generation, the first of whom turned 65 in 2011.

“The iPad 2 is just one more powerful tool to keep older adults growing, engaged and connected to each other and to the world,” said Kari Olson, chief information officer at Front Porch and president of the Front Porch Center for Technology Innovation and Wellbeing. “Staying socially connected to family and friends is an important key to wellbeing and longevity.”

The iPad 2 is light weight (about 1.5 pounds), small size (about the size of a writing tablet), and portability make it a great device for both inside and outside the home for someone who primarily wants it for ‘recreational’ purposes.

According to some studies, older adults queried said they don’t like new electronic gadgets because they are designed only for younger generations. iPad 2 is an exception because it has features suited for the older generation. The iPad 2 has a large touch screen display measuring 9.7 inches. The late Steve Jobs, whose Apple corporation is a few miles from Sunny View in Cupertino, California, defended the choice of having this size instead of a typical 7-inch screen so it will be clearer to users of all ages. This is an advantage for older adults who may have eye problems. Having a large display, iPad 2 has enough brightness to simulate natural light that can help older adults in reading comfortably. Browsing pictures and watching movies would also be easier because of the large display.

Sunny View’s iPad program is funded by the Sunny View Foundation, a not-for-profit social ministry organization that provides philanthropic assistance as well as program support to both Sunny View residents and the greater community. Partnering with the Front Porch Center For Technology Innovation and Wellbeing, the two have worked together to educate residents on the iPad’s use as well as give them the opportunity to

use the device for interaction with each other, family, friends and the community at large.

Bill Penrod, director of development for the Sunny View Foundation, teaches weekly classes at the community in which he covers several topics, many of which are suggested by residents. One week it could be a video chat primer, the next week could be how to upload and read books from the local library or how to access newspapers from around the world and still another may be how to research a favorite hobby or passion on the Internet or how to access and use social networking sites like Facebook. "So far the response to the classes has been wonderful," Bill said. "All of the participants are eager to learn and have picked up the technology at a steady pace."

Just ask resident Hugh Williams, a classic car buff. "I love classic and antique cars," Hugh said. "The iPad lets me read *Automobile Quarterly* online and visit YouTube or blogs to check out all the classics like the first cars I ever owned, a 1923 Buick and a Model A Ford."

"I read a lot of ibooks," said Sunny View resident Bob Brenner. "I recently took it on a trip and I found it extremely convenient. I video chat with friends in Oregon and Virginia. I think seeing someone while you talk to them is much more personal than just hearing their voices over the phone. I can't tell you how much I love it. I've kept it at my side ever since the classes here began."

"I love the travel logs I've found online," Ruth said. "This month alone I've been to India, Japan and Bhutan."

At Sunny View, residents need not own their own iPad. Residents merely just check one out for the day or week from the front desk. They can also connect through a free campus wide Wi-Fi network which is standard at Front Porch communities.

"I actually do quite a bit with the iPad," Lee said. "I like watching the X-Factor, I like reading historical novels and science fiction. I'm a curious person so I like visiting web sites like the Smithsonian Institution and art museums. And of course I'm hooked on solitaire. The best part is that it's portable so it's convenient wherever I go."

According to Bill, courses on using the Internet are popular. Once seniors learn the basics of different search engines, which are special navigational programs used to find information, and how to send and receive e-mail, a whole new world opens up. Sunny View iPad users can even have their iPad loaner loaded with their personal email account. "Older adults can visit web sites that address health issues, current events, politics, hobbies, chat rooms, and anything else you can imagine. The topics are endless," Bill said.

"I consider the iPad now part of my standard equipment," Ruth said. "It's as standard as my purse. I never knew I could be so excited about something like this. It's small, but powerful."

About Front Porch

Front Porch is one of the largest not-for-profit providers of retirement living communities in Southern California. Front Porch active adult and full-service retirement communities offer a full range of options from independent living to continuing care, along with specialized programs like memory support. With innovative communities and programs that meet the changing needs of people as they age, Front Porch communities represent a leading-edge approach to wellness in aging. Front Porch is comprised of 10 full-service retirement communities in California and two adult living communities: one in Louisiana and one in Florida. Of these, six are Continuing Care Retirement Communities (CCRC). Front Porch, based in Burbank, California, and founded in 1999, is a not-for-profit organization that gives back to its residents and the communities it serves.

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