

## **MODERN GADGETS MAKE LIFE A LOT EASIER AND EVEN SAFER**

**December 17, 2002**

We live in a modern age of technology. Gadgets simplify our everyday living and give us more free time. They make life safer and everyday chores easier.

Off the top of my head I can think of several I use endorse, and enjoy. There are others I admire, respect and am grateful for, but personally, am committed to foregoing at the present time.

I swear by the microwave. I use it several times a day to warm, cook, defrost and heat everything from soup to boot waterproofing compound. It may not do everything as well as is claimed, but lives up to its promises with popcorn. It's one of the few modern day miracles I have been able to reasonably operate.

The cell phone is another innovation I heartily endorse, although at present I would rather let my granddaughter use mine. It's safety over convenience and added peace of mind for Grandpa and Grandma.

Direct TV via satellite competes with reading for my entertainment, news, educational interests and pleasure. Local news is the only item we call on NBC, CBS or ABC to provide us with. All of our national news comes by way of Fox, which is the only one of the four networks that dares to claim its reporting is fair and balanced.

The Discovery and National Geographic channels are the two major sources of the latest innovations in science, environment, health and social issues. They are only the two most popular of the many available to our family in that area.

The British Broadcasting Corporation of America (BBCA) gives us an unvarnished look at how we are perceived by others as well as the pure pleasure of British comedy.

I only have one other modern marvel to mention at this time. It's the Franklin Advanced Thesaurus sold by Radio Shack. It fits in the palm of your hand and is a combination spell checker and dictionary. It saves one a great deal of time pawing through a cumbersome huge dictionary. There are many similar products out there and everyone should consider one as a Christmas present for the students in your circle.

The computer is one of the machines I admire, respect and am grateful for, but will forgo for the time being. If I were younger, smarter and more on the ball I would undoubtedly be one of its most relegated users. At this stage in my life mastering this daunting modern marvel appears to be an impossible task to me.

Even the two sports I still enjoy have left me in the dust when it comes to present-day aids and equipment. They are hunting and fishing.

I am still from the old school when it comes to the use of two-way radios and exclusive use of tree stands for deer hunting. The reason, unlike many I have outlined above, is not because their use is that difficult, but because with all the other technologies pointing to the hunter's favor, I still want to give the quarry a sporting chance.

The GPS (global positioning system) is the very latest device to accurately pinpoint your location on a map in relation to other points. It is an excellent and accurate way to find your way to any given point, such as a hot fishing hole in the vastness of large bodies of waters, and your way back to the dock in darkness or fog.

Gary Lee mentioned the GPS as an instrument that hunger Arthur Birchmeyer apparently was relying on to find his way back to his vehicle. If I read Gary's account of

the incident correctly, Mr. Birchmeyer's dependence on his GPS may have been a factor in his demise. If I am correct in that assumption, I would be very much afraid of the same thing happening to me under similar circumstances.

If and when I ever decide to buy a GPS you can bet your bippy I will be backing it up with my old reliable map and compass. What am I talking about? I never expect to get that far back in the woods or on a lake big enough to ever worry about getting lost again.