

# Beepers help baby boomers to bridge generation gap

**B**aby Boomers are caught in a three-way squeeze: hectic careers, rearing children and caring for aging parents.

But technology can relieve some of the stress, especially in the case of aging parents. Almost 50 percent of the pagers sold during this holiday season will be purchased as gift items, and many of those gifts will be used to link generations. So says PageMart, Inc., one of the nation's fastest growing providers of wireless communications. Surveys of user groups indicate beepers are fast becoming the communications tool of choice for adult children looking for easy, affordable ways to stay in touch with their aging parents.

"Beepers are rapidly becoming an integral part of the complex lifestyle support system people are piecing together," said Paul Turner, PageMart's vice president of customer service.

Beepers offer care givers freedom of movement and freedom from worry, because wireless search-and-find technology can locate them anywhere, anytime. And aging parents like being able

to easily reach their busy children.

Features such as personal 800 voice mail numbers let older folks use pagers to leave long-distance messages free of charge, an added benefit to those on fixed incomes.

When aging parents are confined to nursing homes, administrators welcome pagers as a means of quickly contacting responsible parties in an emergency.

Pagers are low-cost, easy-to-use technology that provides immediate accessibility. Those scouting gift ideas for friends and family will find beepers are welcome and practical stocking stuffers.

Pagers are available for as little as \$59 and local numeric paging begins at \$6.95 a month. Popular text message pagers cost about \$150. Local text messaging services range from \$12 to \$25 per month.

By the end of the decade, virtually all parents of Baby Boomers will be elderly. Providing some degree of care for them will be an everyday concern for about 30 percent of the work force, says American Demographics magazine. The magazine also observes today's

seniors want to live independently of their children. By 2010, an estimated 13 million Americans aged 65 and older will be living alone.

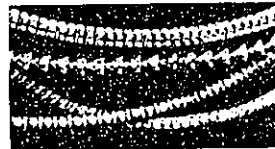
"This is a time when families really take stock," said Paul Turner, PageMart's vice president of customer service. "When parents are alone, they're perceived as more vulnerable and the need to stay in touch becomes more real."

Boomers, wise in the ways of juggling jobs and child care, are discovering elder care is inherently more difficult. Experts note caring for an aging parent is sharply different from caring for children because it's far more unpredictable. That unpredictability may be a natural part of aging, but it's also a major contributor to stress for care givers.

Unfortunately, many people are learning the emergencies and crises that accompany aging are more likely to increase than decrease. To complicate matters, an aging parent often lives 100 or more miles away.

Carrying a beeper is one way Boomers alleviate the stress of caring for aging parents.

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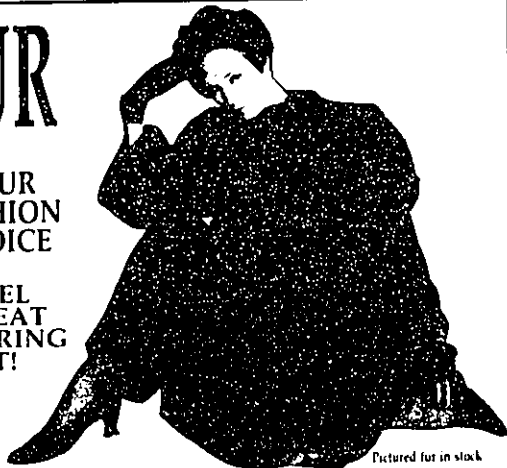
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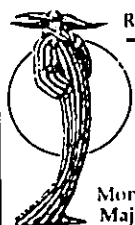


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