

**By GEORGE ROBERTSON, M.D.**

I go kicking and screaming into the 21st century trying to resist or ignore the technology surge I find myself in. My mind says that we don't need all the phones, video games and many other advances that are all around us. I become angered when my wife picks up her iPhone knowing that she will be involved with e-mails and messages from outside my field of interest and that she will be taken up in the process for many minutes – time that could be given to me.

Then the other day I was in a hurry to get out the door for work. I got a good distance down the road before I noticed my cell phone wasn't in my pocket. I can just do without it today I thought and refused to turn around and go back and get it. Things went fine till I wanted to tell what time it was for my first surgery case. I didn't have the phone to tell me the time and had long since quit wearing a watch because of the convenient window and my cell phone with the time continually displayed and accurate to a nanosecond.

Then after getting through part of the workload I had some time for errands I thought so I left the hospital for surrounding shops. Unbeknownst to me a patient had arrived expecting her surgical procedure. She wasn't on the list but my nurse saw the opportunity with the opening in my schedule and told the hospital to get ready for the procedure. Then came the task of getting in touch with me. Since I didn't have my cell phone you can see the problem.

An hour later when I showed up for my next scheduled event I met several frustrated workers, an anxious patient complete with family and an office nurse who had been looking for me the entire time. This little departure from technology put me behind in my now revised workload and because of that several patients were left waiting for me.

I mentioned my dilemma to a friend at church and she said she couldn't imagine doing without a cell phone now. She depended on it to keep in touch with her ailing relative and her children scattered all over town.

I'm not sure if we can get by anymore without these rude inconveniencies that are so beneficial to the way we do things today but while I was writing this article my wife's cell phone battery

died and we actually had time for a face-to-face conversation.

***Editor's Note: George Robertson is a physician with Family Medical Associates, PC, in Lebanon.***