Left: volunteer monitor Linda French greets a visitor from behind the new desk in the redesigned reception area. Above: Two of the 13 new workstations and chairs for computer users. Other improvements include training tables, storage units and a special table for printing services.

New Equipment, New Look for Tech Center

Visitors to the Technology Resource Center are enjoying new equipment and more attractive and comfortable furnishings these days.

The Center received a major upgrade in mid-May thanks to a donation from two Leisure World organizations — The Trust and the Foundation. The funds enabled the purchase of new furniture as well as upgraded equipment for both PC and Mac users.

"These improvements provide greater comfort as well as access to the latest technology for our visitors," said David Merritt, president of the Leisure World Tech Board, which manages the operation of the Center. "And they make it possible for us to provide more educational opportunities for this community."

Improvements include a new reception desk, work stations, a full service color printer and new computers for both Mac and PC users.

The purchases were made after several months of research to determine what improvements were needed and how best to configure new furnishings in the available space, Merritt said.

In This Issue

About Us

Leisure World Tech is a 501(c)(3) organization responsible for managing the Technology Resource Center in Clubhouse 2.

TechTalk

New & Noteworthy

by David Merritt
President, Leisure World Tech

As the Leisure World Technology Resource Center continues to grow and thrive, I want to take a moment express my heartfelt thanks to all of you—residents, guests and, of course, our dedicated volunteers.

I am especially grateful to the Leisure World Foundation for recognizing our Center with a Service Excellence Award and to the Leisure World Trust,. whose generous donation has made possible significant physical improvements to our environment. The changes you read about on page 1 will provide greater comfort for our visitors and greater efficiency for our operations.

Our mission remains clear: to help our neighbors feel confident and capable in today's digital world. Whether you're sending an email, learning how to use a smart phone, or attending a class on cyber security, our team is here to support you every step of the way.

New Website Features

I'm pleased to announce the launch of a new FAQ page on our website at *leisureworldtech.org*. This resource is designed to help you quickly find answers to common questions and better understand the many services we offer—like free access to Windows PCs, Macs and Chromebooks, along with one-on-one tech support and both monochrome and color printers.

Also be sure to visit our new *What's Happening* page for the latest on upcoming classes, seminars and tech events. And if you can't attend our programs in person, check out our *Learn Something New* page, to see on-demand videos from some of our most popular sessions.

Please Consider Volunteering

As we continue to expand, we're also looking for volunteers to help us run the center. In particular, we need someone to coordinate our training programs, as well as additional board members who can help shape the future of the center and bring fresh ideas to the table.

If you or someone you know is interested in getting involved, please don't hesitate to reach out—we'd love to hear from you.

Coming Up

Chrome book Basics
Friday, June 20, Rossmoor Room
Clubhouse 2, 3-5 pm,
Presented by David Merritt

Cybersecurity for Seniors
Thursday, May 29, 1:00–3:00 pm,
auditorium at Clubhouse II
Presented by Seth Hammerman

iPhone and iPads for Seniors
Friday, June 13, 3-5 pm,
Rossmoor Room, Clubhouse 2,
Presented by Kevin Bishop.

Registration for these classes is handled by the Lifestyle Offices in both clubhouses beginning June 10.

IT Help Clinics

The Technology Resource Center is offering free weekly clinics to answer questions and solve problems related to portable digital devices.

Visitors may bring devices to the clinic for evaluation on the following days:

Apple products: Tuesday, 11 am-1 pm, Wednesday & Friday, 3-5 pm

Chromebooks, Windows or Android, Wednesday, 1-3 pm

The Monitors' Corner

A hearty and heartfelt Thank You is extended to all our talented and generous monitors from the Leisure World Tech Board of Directors as well as from the hundreds of residents who visit the Resource Center every month. You are the reason we've become such a trusted, welcoming space for learning, support, and community connection. Our Center makes a real difference to this community and it would not exist without you.

As we grow, we welcome your feedback, ideas and suggestions. You are our front line and you see first-hand what our residents need and what works best—so please don't hesitate to share your thoughts with us.

You can help us keep the Center open during all our published hours of operation if you can add a shift to your present schedule. At present, a monitor who finishes a shift must ask our guests to leave if no one has volunteered to cover the next two hours.

Let's Keep Getting Better

We continue to plan for improvements, and you are seeing the results of those efforts in your new workspace. But that's just the beginning. We're working on new programs and activities for our users and for you. Here are a few items on our current *to do* list.

We need to

- Recruit volunteers to serve on our Board of Directors to help guide the center's future

- Recruit a program coordinator to help organize and expand training events

- Expand our hours of operation so we can be more available to support this community.

Coping With Change

By now, all our volunteers are aware that our Center has undergone a major renovation. While we are enjoying a huge improvement to our physical space, we are also dealing with changes that could affect our ability to help visitors.

Where is everything located? What's special about the new printer and how does it work? What resources are available on the web site? These are just a sampling of questions that may be facing monitors as they get used to the changes in the Center's workspace.

In order to bring you up to date about the new equipment and share ideas about ways to provide the best possible services going forward, we have scheduled some in-person, volunteer refresher sessions to review recent changes and give you the opportunity to ask questions.

If questions arise or if a problem occurs, during your shift, please let us know by using the link on the computer monitor on the reception desk, which will connect you to to the online Monitor Feedback form. Use the form to describe the issue; it will be forwarded to the monitor coordinator or a board member.

Several new tables designed specifically for training sessions are part of the overall renovation. The tables are paired with new, more comfortable chairs. Both tables and chairs are stackable, providing more efficient use of space as well as better seating arrangements for meetings and educational programs.

The center has also acquired a new, high speed color printer that includes scanning, duplex printing and copying capabilities.

"We spent a lot of time making sure we got this right," Merritt said. "And we're pleased now to offer a more comfortable space and better tools to our volunteers as well as those who use our services. "

Your Computer is Talking to The Cloud and That's A Good Thing

If you live in Leisure World, you probably remember something called a floppy disk, which was succeeded by a similar thing called a hard disk, which was succeeded by several iterations of insertable plastic data storage things, which finally culminated in a thin, shiny, plastic thing that lives on today as a compact disk, or CD.

In the beginning . . . of the age of personal computing devices . . . files, or data, were stored on these media when we needed to move them from one place to another or simply to keep the hard drive in the computer from running out of space (a problem mostly forgotten these days).

All that is ancient history in the contemporary digital world. Internal storage drives in modern devices can handle more data than the most powerful machine you could buy for personal use in the 1990s. Data can be transferred wirelessly, and if it needs to be moved physically, all it takes is a thumb drive, named to reflect its size (aka, flash, jump or just usb).

Big Changes in the Storage Wars

But the biggest advance in storing and handling data is not a thing that fits into a tiny hole on your laptop or iPad. It's called The Cloud and it's sometimes a mystery, especially to seniors.

In fact, The Cloud has been around for a while now. And while it is old news in the world of technology, it has wrought huge changes in the way data is handled.

The Cloud is not any one specific, or even fluffy white thing. The term is used to describe banks (think hundreds) of powerful computers, called servers, located in many different places often referred to as data centers.

When a document or photograph or any other kind of data is sent to The Cloud, it just ends up, in bits and bytes, on one of these servers somewhere on this earth. Wireless technology is used to move files seamlessly from your device to a designated server. For most users, data in cloud storage is available via the Internet.

And if a meteor hits the server that houses your favorite photo, a duplicate is somewhere else, on another bit of the cloud, to make sure that file is never lost.

Everybody Loves The Cloud

Many familiar technology organizations have invested in this technology and offer commercial access to their particular clouds.

Google, Apple's iCloud, Amazon and many others provide limited free access to customers who buy their products. But they charge monthly or yearly fees for users who need lots of space. Today's businesses have adopted cloud technology not only to manage data but also to make it accessible to employees and customers wherever they might be located.

On a personal level, files from your smart phone or computer are typically transferred automatically to cloud storage unless you specifically choose a different option. Whatever the case, the data can be recalled to the screen in front of you instantly with a simple digital command, like clicking on the file name.

The Best Part

Retrieving data from cloud storage is seamless to the user and the file is now available via Internet on all his or her devices.

Here's the best part. Cloud storage makes it possible for you to read your email or admire your photos any time, anywhere you have access to the Internet. You can use your unique user name and password to log in from your bedroom, from the beach or from Barcelona. As long as you have Internet service, your digital device can talk to your own cloud.