

Steve Weyer: Confessions of a technology addict

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Steve Weyer is a technology addict. The website and software developer worked 20 years at Stanford University, Xerox PARC, Atari, Hewlett Packard and Apple before switching to consulting and producing software products. He has lived in Ashland for almost six years after living in Bucks County, Pa., Seattle and the San Francisco Bay Area.

Weyer is active on the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute's Curriculum Committee and is an OLLI instructor. He will teach a course on e-books this term, but he has also taught courses in Ashland and Medford on the history of the Internet and crossword puzzles.

He and his wife, Maria Geigel, are intrepid hikers who completed an extensive trip through Patagonia.

Favorite aspects about Ashland: It is a walkable small town with culture and outdoor activities like hiking.

What else do you do when you have time off? I go to the Y, hike, volunteer for local organizations and do crosswords.

What's still on your to-do list? Climb Mount McLoughlin, Mount Thielsen and South Sister; return to Patagonia and do other international travel; improve at being present and communicating compassionately.

What fact gets your class's attention? Crosswords have been interwoven in our culture like movies, theater and music. I was interviewed and helped select music for a KSKQ program last year. A list of songs such as "Crossword" by Jethro Tull and "Four Down And Twelve Across" by

George Strait are posted on the station's website at <http://www.kskq.org/maya/?p=1215>

Tell us something about the Internet we can't just quickly Google: The first version of the Internet (Arpanet) connected four computers in California and Utah in 1969. That was more than 40 years ago. Despite claims by his political opponents, Al Gore did not "invent" it or use that word.

Gore's words, though self-serving and ill-chosen, appear to exaggerate his role: "During my service in the United States Congress, I took the initiative in creating the Internet. I took the initiative in moving forward a whole range of initiatives that have proven to be important to our country's economic growth and environmental protection, improvements in our educational system."

However, during the 1980s and early 1990s, his championing of government funding and policy fostered and created this new infrastructure, even though it was not a technical invention.

This led to an exponential expansion of the Internet from a few research institutions and major universities to many universities and then to commercial and consumer use, especially as the World Wide Web began to emerge in 1991. That was more than 20 years ago.

And if we wanted to learn more about you? There are more details about me and my courses at <http://communiccrossings.com/olli>

About This Series

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