

## Helping Others to Help You

We all know about the need for Wills and Power of Attorney in case of death or incapacity, but what have we done to assure our heirs or caretakers can access our electronic accounts? This document shares some thoughts about what we may each want to do to help others who are trying to help us when we are no longer able to carry on with our daily business.

First, some helpful information. Electronic accounts such as email may inactivate if there is no activity within a period of time, such as 60 days. Other accounts that send renewal or billing notifications electronically may be canceled or be inaccessible if payments are not made. People trying to take care of our affairs when we are unable to do so, may not know about those accounts, or if they do know, may not be able to access them without difficulty or it may be past deadlines before they can gain access.

Suggestion: Just as you would have a written Will or Power of Attorney, prepare a **typed** or **handwritten** inventory of electronic accounts with passwords and instructions on what to do about each account if you are unable to take care of them. Keep that document in a safe place. *Don't put that document on a computer that is connected to the Internet or on a computer that might be accessible to someone you do not want to have that information.* **Do** let the people who will be helping you know where that inventory is located. This will facilitate their carrying out your wishes.

The following is a list of the types of accounts you may want to include in your inventory:

- Banking
- Cable company
- Computer Log-in
- Credit card
- Email (electronic mail)
- Internet account (Internet Service Provider)
- Investment
- Mobile phone
- Newsletter
- On-line shopping (eBay, LLBean, etc.)
- Prior employer
- Retiree services account
- On-line subscriptions
- Telephone
- Web sites, including personal Web sites (e.g., Willow Valley trip registration)

Suggested inventory list format (for form, see next page):

Internet Address   User Name   Password   Instructions and Other Information

Remember to update the list when accounts or passwords change. Put a backup list in a safe, remote place.

If you have any suggestions for improving the document you are viewing, please send an email to [wvcomputerclub@gmail.com](mailto:wvcomputerclub@gmail.com).

