

SANIBEL SHELL SHOCKED

The Charge of the Battery Brigade

By Art Stevens

We live in a world of constant change. And one change I'd personally like to see is a battery that will last forever.

It seems as if I spend half of every single day charging some device or other. If I don't, then life in the 21st century fast lane will grind to a halt. We've become so dependent on devices with rechargeable batteries that we almost need to keep a schedule of how often to charge them. I seem to charge batteries more often than some babies have their diapers changed.

Please, someone, make a battery that will last forever.

Devices seem to run out of battery juice just when you least expect it. And if you forget to charge them they go on strike. When I'm not charging my Blackberry I'm charging my Kindle, then the iPad, then the Water Pick, then the iPod, then my electric shaver, then the head phones – well, you get the idea.

Please, Duracell, Energizer Bunny, McDonald's, George Lucas – anybody-- make a battery that will last forever.

Please, President Obama, get a law passed that batteries – and social security – need to last forever. Batteries are like vampires in some ways. Vampires sleep by day and drink their precious nectar at night. Batteries do their work during daylight hours but drink their reviving electricity primarily at night.

The problem isn't only with batteries that need recharging. It's also with standard batteries that just die on you without prior warning. One morning I got up late because the battery that

operated the alarm clock had died during the night. I looked at my watch but that, too, was battery dead.

Then my shaver wouldn't start because I had neglected to charge its battery. I brushed my teeth and filled up the Water Pick with water but it, too, needed to be charged. I went to check my emails on my Blackberry but it wouldn't turn on because I had forgotten to charge it overnight.

It was going to be that kind of a day.

I needed to add up some numbers but my calculator wouldn't start. I wanted to listen to some music but the iPod needed charging. I held my breath as I tried starting my car. Fortunately, the ignition turned on immediately. Whew. But the GPS needed charging.

Please, China, you've got an industrial revolution going on. Can't you invent a battery that will last forever? You don't want fortune cookies to be your only lasting legacy, now do you? How can we live like this? There are times when I don't think my house has enough electrical outlets to handle all of the devices that need constant charging.

One morning I wanted to use the toaster but my army of devices was using all the available outlets so I ate a raw English muffin instead. My electric bills are soaring because of the need to charge batteries. What about the good old days when life was simpler without the need to constantly charge batteries? You'd buy batteries; they would live a long life and give you plenty of warning when new ones were needed.

If a flashlight started dimming you reached into your kitchen drawer and pulled out new batteries. And the batteries that need to be replaced don't seem to give you any warning anymore. They just die on you when you least expect it.

Who in the world invented rechargeable batteries? Isn't there anyone out there who can hear my cry for help? I can't go on this way. The more I charge and replace batteries, the more my own get drained. Just like my devices, I, too, am running on empty. I am tired of devoting my life to the tender loving care of batteries. I have more important things to do, like monitoring the price of my Apple stock.

Intel, won't you stop playing around with microchips and do something really useful? Get your research guys to invent a battery that will last forever.