

## Social Security Column

OVER THE RIVER AND THROUGH THE WOODS TO [WWW.SOCIALSECURITY.GOV](http://WWW.SOCIALSECURITY.GOV)

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Kids are back in school, and in the breezy afternoons, you can find them raking leaves, or jumping in them. It's that time of year. Soon, on the way to Thanksgiving dinner, children may be singing in the back seats of cars: *Over the river and through the woods to Grandmother's house we go ...*

Did you know that the original song had children in a horse-drawn sleigh on their way to Grandfather's house?

A lot has changed since those days. Take the Internet, for example. A generation ago, no one would have considered mapping out directions on the web, or ordering a package online, delivered directly to the destination. No one would have imagined doing business with Social Security with a computer.

This Thanksgiving Day, after you've enjoyed your feast and exhausted conversation, why not show Grandma and Grandpa how easily they can use [www.socialsecurity.gov](http://www.socialsecurity.gov) to avoid unneeded trips to a Social Security office.

For starters, you can take them to the online *Retirement Estimator*, a tool that helps them figure out how much they may get in monthly benefits depending on when they retire. It's available at [www.socialsecurity.gov/estimator](http://www.socialsecurity.gov/estimator).

Or tell them about the hot new service everyone is talking about: the new online *Social Security Statement*. It provides a record of past earnings, along with projected earnings for future years to give an estimate of future Social Security benefits. It's available at [www.socialsecurity.gov/mystatement](http://www.socialsecurity.gov/mystatement).

You also can show them our library of online publications containing all the information they need to know about an array of Social Security, retirement, and Medicare subjects. You can see our publications at [www.socialsecurity.gov/pubs](http://www.socialsecurity.gov/pubs). If they were thinking about retirement, you may want to show them just how knowledgeable you are by suggesting they read the publication, *When To Start Receiving Retirement Benefits*, at [www.socialsecurity.gov/pubs/10147.html](http://www.socialsecurity.gov/pubs/10147.html).

And if they're ready to retire, take them to [www.socialsecurity.gov/applyonline](http://www.socialsecurity.gov/applyonline), where they can apply online for retirement benefits in as little as 15 minutes — that may be less time than it takes to brew a pot of coffee and slice a pumpkin pie. Once they click the “submit” button, they're done. (And so are you.)

As you're preparing to go over the river, through the woods, or across town to visit family this Thanksgiving Day, consider inviting [www.socialsecurity.gov](http://www.socialsecurity.gov) to the gathering.

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