The NCTCUG Journal

Wi-Fi Security

By Dick Maybach n2nd(at)charter.net

Many of us use wireless routers in our homes and when we are traveling. In our homes, they provide our computers with high-speed Internet access without the expense and inconvenience installing multi-wire cables throughout the house. While traveling they usually provide the only means of accessing the Internet. Many people forget that when they use Wi-Fi they are using a two-way radio, and that, unless they use effective security, anybody within a few hundred feet can eavesdrop on everything they send and receive. Indeed, many governments seem to be ignorant of this, as the current flap about Google capturing Wi-Fi data shows. If you don't know, Google vehicles take pictures of building and homes so they can provide street views for their map service. At the same time, they look for open Wi-Fi signals so they can identify public hot spots, and homes with unencrypted Wi-Fi routers look like public hot spots. While doing this, Google captured and recorded some of the data being sent, which caused some governments to begin invasion-of-privacy investigations. Since the "private" data was broadcast, this is equivalent to considering that someone who reads a billboard has invaded the privacy of the billboard owner.

When you first install a Wi-Fi router in your home, its default setup provides zero security. There is no encryption, and the administrator account is "admin" (or similar) and has no password. As a result, anybody within range can see all your traffic and can access the Internet through your account. Besides the loss of privacy, you may be legally liable for any illegal activities of those who use this access, for example, downloading pirated movies and music. Your first actions after installing a new Wi-Fi router should be to enable encryption, change the name of the administrator account, and put a strong password on it. Two types of encryption are available, WEP and WPA. WEP is worthless; it can be broken in a few minutes with minimal effort and knowledge. If you have an old router that has only WEP, throw it out immediately. WPA is secure enough for home use, *providing you use a strong password*. A strong password does not appear in a dictionary and is not a common proper name. Such trivial modifications as replacing "i" with "1",

Inside

Discovering Windows 7 – Part 10

## By Neil Stahfest – Tacoma Area PC User Group

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You've had your computer for a while and you're happy (or at least content) with the way it works. You insert a music CD and the Windows Media Player automatically plays your music. You go to your Pictures library and you see your photographs with Windows the Photo Gallery (or a similar program). Then, one day, something changes. Some other program is playing your music or displaying your pictures and you don't like it. You tried some new program and it hijacked your settings. It's an old story and if it hasn't happened to you yet, it will. So what can you do when it happens?

Windows 7 makes it very easy to set the way your computer connects with various devices (cameras, iPhone, DVDs, etc.) and media to reclaim your settings. All you have to do is click on "Start", when the Search Box appears type "AutoPlay". Next, click on "AutoPlay" at the top of the window.

You should now see the AutoPlay control window. Note, there should be a small check box in the upper right corner that will turn off all AutoPlay functions. If the check mark is missing, left- click on the box to make one.

This window shows all of the functions that you can control with AutoPlay. You'll need to scroll down to see the full list. If you click on an AutoPlay selection (such as "DVD movie" as the illustration shows) you'll see a list off all of the alternative programs plus additional actions such as "Take no action". Just select the program or action you want to activate to use and then click on the "Save" button at the bottom of the window. In the example above, I selected "Play DVD using HP QuickPlay". Now HP QuickPlay will be used when I insert a DVD movie disk.
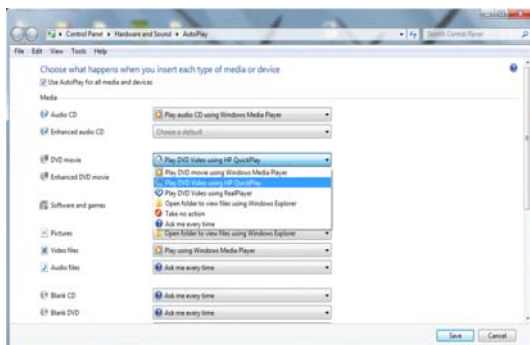
Taskbar "previews" are another new Windows 7 feature. Whenever you open an application a window (such as a Word document or your Internet browser) an icon appears on the Taskbar. If you open two or more documents or browser windows, additional icons appear as stacked icons on top of the original, sort of like stacked cards. When you move your mouse pointer over the icon(s) a very small preview of the window appears as shown here. This can be really useful if you have two or more documents or Internet browser windows open at the same time. Pointing at a window causes the full sized version to temporarily appear in your main window. Also, while pointing at the preview window, a red box appears in the upper right corner that will let you close the window and its contents. Clicking on a preview window causes the contents of that window to become the active window. This can be a convenient way to select and copy portions of one or more documents into another document.

Of course there is a downside to this feature. Just as with previous versions of Windows, when you open multiple windows at the same time, the additional windows draw on your computer's resources. This preview feature places an even greater demand on your computer's memory and CPU. Older computers and computers without a lot of RAM will become less responsive and slow down. This is one reason why Microsoft recommends at least 3 gigabytes of RAM on computers that run Windows 7. Fortunately there is a simple solution to this problem. You can either remember to keep fewer tabs open at the same time or turn off your web browser's tab function.
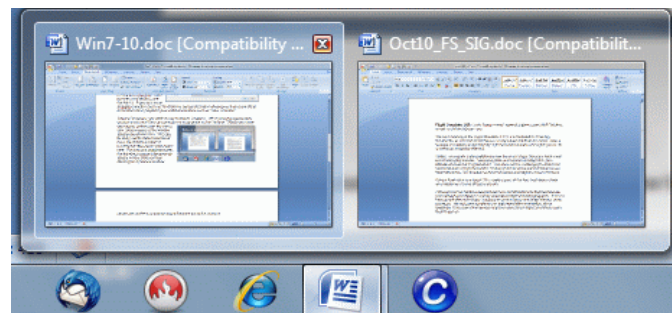
Image Resizer

By Lynn Page, Editor, Crystal River Users Group, Florida December 2010 issue, CRUG newsletter www.crug.com newsletter (at) crug.com

If you upgraded from Windows XP to Vista or Windows 7 you may miss the XP Powertoy Image Resizer. It was great when you needed to quickly create different size images of a photo. Maybe you need a small image to email or a special size for desktop wallpaper. There are many reasons to create of a particular size image. Images can be resized in a photo editor. My choice is Corel Paint Shop Pro Photo. I use it to edit and size my digital photos. But then if I want a special size edited photo it is quicker to use Image Resizer. Download from imageresizer.codeplex.com.

Image Resizer is a clone of the Image Resizer Powertoy for Windows XP. To use Image Resizer locate the photo or photos in Windows Explorer. Select the photos to resize and then right click on the selection.

In the resize Pictures dialog box select from the predefined sizes. To specify a custom size click the Advanced button. The advanced area also contains two other selections. Toggle them on or off. I recommend leaving the Resize the original pictures unchecked. You don't want to inadvertently resize a large image to 854 x 480.

The new images are saved indicating a size.
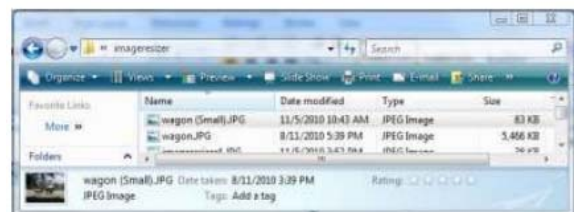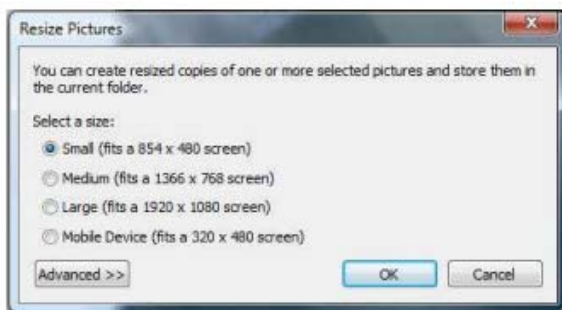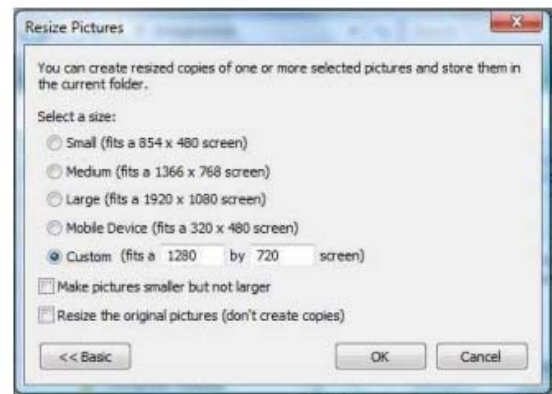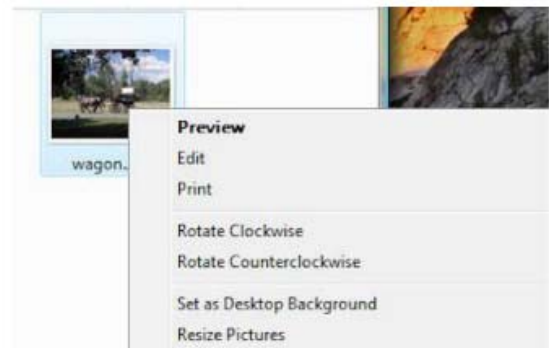
Discovering Windows 7 – Part 11
by Neil Stahfest – Tacoma Area PC User Group

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A few months ago, while discussing Windows 7 System Restore, I mentioned that there is a limit to the number of Restore Points that Windows will save. Restore Points are created every time there is a Windows 7 update so, generally speaking, at least one new Restore Point is created every week. It is possible that when you discovering the need to use a Restore Point it will be too late to go back to the point you want.

Microsoft says that at least three to five percent of each disk should be reserved for Restore Points. As it happens, Microsoft has given us a way to control the amount of space reserved for Restore Points. All you have to do is click on the Start button, then right click on Computer and then left click on Properties. Now left click on System protection and you'll see the System Properties window.

In the Protection Settings area you'll see all the hard drives in your computer and whether or not Protection, System Restore, is enabled. In the example on the right, Protection is enabled for drive C but turned off for drives D and E. You can click on a drive, high lighting it, and then click on the Configure button.

When you click on the Configure button you open the System protection window. As you can see, in this new window, under Restore Settings you can choose what kind of information is saved in Restore Points,

setting and previous versions of files or just previous versions of files. Or you can turn off Restore Points all together. Under Disk Space Usage you can use a slider to set the amount of space reserved for Restore Points and delete all previously saved Restore Points.

While we're on the topic of saving and restoring, this might be a good time to talk about the Windows Recycle Bin. Periodically I guess all of us delete files and folders that we "think" we don't need. Deleting files and folders is a two step process. When you click on "Delete" they go to the Recycle Bin. At that point they appear to be gone but they are not really deleted. If you check the amount of used space on your hard drive you won't see any change. It is not until you empty the Recycle Bin that they are really gone. This gives you a chance to get restore deleted files and folders if you suddenly realize that you accidently deleted something that you need or simply change your mind. In that case, you simply double left-click on the Recycle Bin. After selecting the files or folders that you want to undelete with one left-click, just click on Restore all items (circled in red). Instantly the files or folders are back where they were before you deleted them.

Of course, just like your hard drive, the Recycle Bin is space limited. Typically 10% of your hard drive
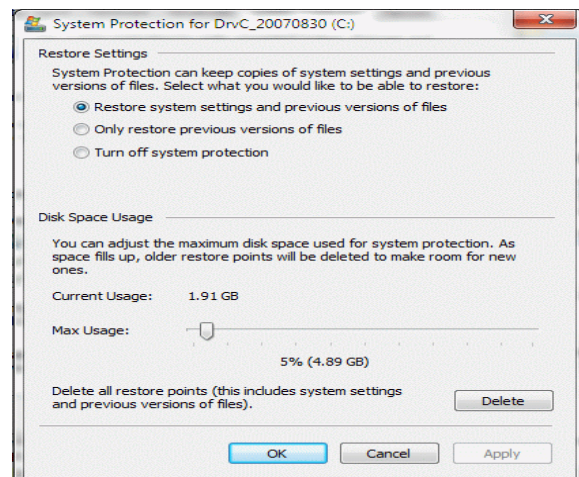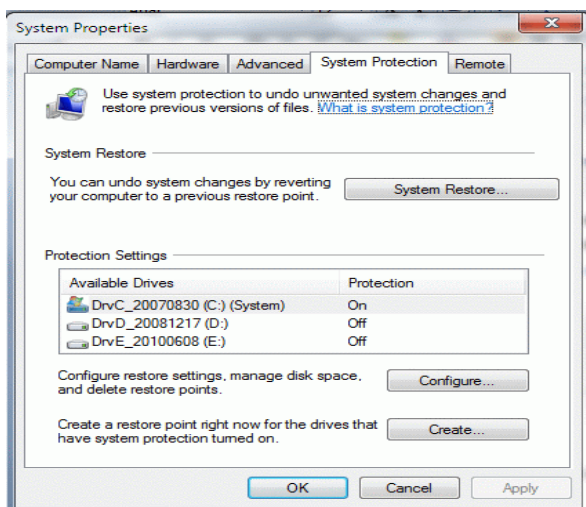
space is reserved for the Recycle Bin. If you don't periodically empty the Recycle Bin it will eventually get full. At that point the oldest files will be deleted to make space for the newest deleted files.

After some thought, you may decide that the Recycle Bin is too large and wasting your hard drive space. After all, 10% of a 500 GB hard drive is 50 GB. You may need some of that space for something else. On the other hand, if you have a 160 GB hard drive a 16 GB Recycle Bin may seem too small. Fortunately, Windows gives you a way to change the size of your Recycle Bin.

All you need to do is to right-click on the Recycle Bin and then left-click on "Properties". There is a separate Recycle Bin for every hard drive or hard drive partition that you have. As you can see in the example, under "Settings for selected location" you can control the size of the of the Recycle Bin. You also have an option to delete the Recycle Bin function as well as an option to delete the confirmation dialog when you delete files.
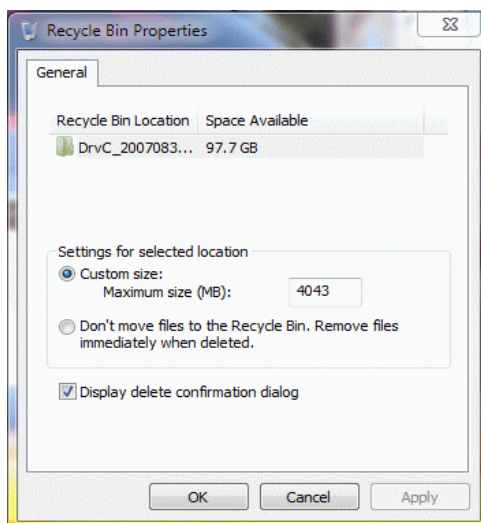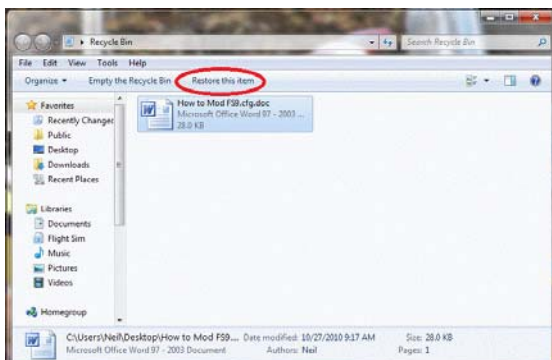
Why Do I Love Bit.Ly Let Me Count The Ways

By Linda Gonse, Editor / Webmaster, ORCOPUG, California Orange County IBM PC Users' Group August 2010 issue, Nibbles & Bits www.orcopug.org editor (at) orcopug.org

There are several reasons why I like bit.ly better as a URL shortener than tinyurl, which I always used. One is that people haven't become afraid of bit.ly as they had due to scare stories about being redirected to malware sites by tinyurl. Also compounding the rumors, at least one of the top tier antivirus programs warned users about tinyurls with a popup message when they clicked on the shortened URL. (That's why tinyurl started showing previews of the pages that people would open in case they decided to not click on the link.)

Another reason for my switch to bit.ly is that the shortened link you generate is permanent. It never goes away. You can use it to track how many people have clicked on it. You can even get the same link back in case you accidentally delete it.

I like that you can hover over a bit.ly link and see the destination link, and the same window allows you to go directly to the stats regarding how many have clicked on the link, etc. (See image below.)

Now that I am using the Chrome browser, I discovered a bit.ly extension. Just click on the icon on the toolbar and a small sidebar window opens with the bit.ly URL all ready to be copied.

"The Technician Set Up My Laptop, Now What Do I Do?"

**By Gregory West, Member of the Computer Operators of Marysville and Port Huron, MI
and Sarnia Computer User Group, Canada
http://gregorywest.wordpress.com prospector16 (at) gmail.com**

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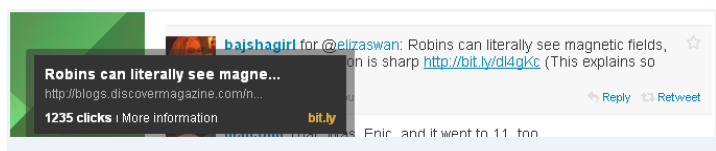all other uses require the permission of the author (see e-mail address above).

Ah, the wonderment of getting a new computer. No more having to watch others show off their computer skills as they demonstrate their new digital slide show, or listen about how they talk with relatives across three oceans for hours at no cost. With your new computer you are ready to join the online communities around the globe.

Three gigabytes of random access memory, 500 gigs of hard drive, a one year subscription to some antivirus / malware protection software utility and you are "good to go," says the clerk in the computer store.

"But does it come with a manual," you ask?

"The manual is in the OS software," the clerk says as he gets you to sign his copy of the credit card slip. "Have a nice day," he hollers as you lug the computer through the doors towards home.

"Ya right," you mutter under your breath

So many choices, too many decisions, but at least you finally got it home. Once you open the lid and go to turn on the new computer you realize that you have no idea what you are doing. In fact, you don't know a gigabyte from a Tyrannosaurus Rex, and you couldn't care less. All you want is to go on the Internet and check your email, surf some websites and maybe learn how to get those 265 photos from your digital camera.

"So now what," you say aloud to yourself? "Where do I begin," you ask your dog in desperation as she gives you that puzzled look.

There is an easy way to learn the various computer functions you need to catch up with your computer geek of a neighbour. First, you can take a formal course at your local college. These courses usually range from beginner to advanced. You can also take online courses (courses offered over the Internet), but this takes a special skill, as many people are not used to working alone and need to get out into a classroom set up with real humans. You can also join a local computer group. Here you will find people with similar interests who provide various seminars on tech-related issues.

I have been on a computer since 1972 where an IBM System/360 Operating System was the popular system in data processing centres. Over the years I have received computer training from all methods mentioned about. In fact, today I am taking two computer courses from books that came with DVD training programs

However, if you simply need to know one certain function on the computer, learn a software program, or how to troubleshoot a problem in your computer, I suggest Google's YouTube videos. Computer instructors, tech companies, libraries, schools and many knowledgable individuals upload training videos to YouTube. Here you not only get free training, but targeted training. For instance, if you need to know how to install a USB flash drive in Windows 7, you simply go to http://youtube.com on the Internet and there will be many videos to help you through this process.

One tip for searching within YouTube for help, try using the term: "tutorials" with your search. Sometimes this will give you a full training course on the particular subject you are interested in learning. I use YouTube all the time when I need help with a particular computer program. But it doesn't stop there either. I wanted to learn how to winterize my RV and save the hundred dollar fee, so I searched for videos on YouTube and have winterized my own trailer ever since for only the cost of antifreeze

Gregory West is a Mac Instructor for Lambton College. He is also Webmaster at Central United Church, the home of Sarnia's new Community Computer Training Centre at: http://goo.gl/76H1. This is free and open to the public as a community service. Learn at your own speed.

Service Packs Explained (and Needed)

By Sandy Berger, Compu-KISS www.compukiss.com sandy (at) compukiss.com

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Although most of us still think of Windows 7 as a brand new operating system, it is, in fact, starting to show its age. Windows 7 made its debut on October 22, 2009. Is one and one-half really old? Well, in the computer world, it is not old, but it is certainly full-grown. One sign of this is that Microsoft has just released the first Service Pack for Windows 7.

A service pack is a collection of updates, bug fixes, and enhancements for a software program. As you know, Microsoft routinely offers updates for their Windows operating systems. These updates come out weekly and they patch or, you might say, repair the operating system so that they remain safe from hackers. They can also include improvements or enhancements to the operating system. At a certain point in time, Microsoft gathers all of those updates, adds any other updates and enhancements they have and issues this batch of updates as a service pack. It is also important to note, that when Microsoft issues a service pack, this service pack also makes sure that all of the updates and enhancements work well together and offer good stability for the operating system.

The question that I am most often asked is this, "If I have installed every update that Microsoft has released, do I still need to install the service pack?" The answer is "yes." Often the service pack contains additional updates and/or enhancements that were not included in the weekly updates. Also, a service pack makes sure that all of the updates are put together properly to make your system run well.

In fact, Microsoft thinks that this is so important that they only support the operating system when it has the proper service packs installed. Each service pack should be installed when it is released. If for some reason they are installed all at the same time, each is installed sequentially.

So, for Windows XP you should have Service Pack 3 installed. Windows Vista should have Service Pack 2, and Windows 7 should have Service Pack 1. To learn

what service pack you have installed, just click on the Start button, right-click on Computer or My Computer, and then click Properties. You will see the service pack listed under the Windows edition.

You can go to the Microsoft website and install a service pack from there, if you happen to be missing one. All service packs from Microsoft are free. If you are using Window 7, the new service pack will be offered to you through Microsoft's automatic update service. This Windows 7 service pack can take up to 30 minutes and will re-boot your computer. I have installed Window 7, Service Pack 1 on several computers without a problem, but you should be aware that installing a service pack is a big update. Microsoft recommends that you back up your computer before installing a service pack. And to be honest, you should be backing up your computer anyway. So if you don't have a backup strategy in place, this is a good time to implement one.

The newest version of Internet Explorer — IE 9 is now in testing and it is already available for free download in a beta version. This is by far, the best version of Internet Explorer that Microsoft has ever released. IE 9 won't run on Windows XP; it requires Windows Vista or Windows 7. Although Microsoft is not requiring Windows 7 Service Release 1 to install IE 9, it is advisable to install this Service Release before you install IE 9.

Service Packs are a fact of life for Windows users. Installing them may be a bit of a pain, but you really need them to make sure that your Windows system is secure and stable and that it performs well.

[NCTCUG Ed. Note: IE 9 is now out; see Windows Updates]

Your Computer's Health – The "Oh Oh" Moment, Part 2

By Art Gresham, Editor, Under the Computer Hood User Group, CA February 2011 issue, UCHUG Drive Light www.uchug.org 1editor101 (at) uchug.org

Oops. Darn, What The....?   You know the feeling. Yesterday everything was fine. Today you are wondering what happened overnight. What can you do if your computer seems to have suddenly gotten sick? Perhaps it was caused by that neat new application, or game, you installed yesterday, or maybe something got installed when you visited that website that promised to speed your computer's internet access, but when you the page opened it ran a moment and then seemed to hang up with no sense that it really did what was expected. Maybe you should not have installed that app/game/utility because it was some kind of rogue or worthless program, or worse, and you are now stuck with a sick system.

Don't you wish you could go back in time to last weekend when everything seemed to be running fine? Well, you can. Probably.

If you are running a Microsoft Windows ME, XP, Vista or 7 then the System Restore is available to offer you protection for many of these kinds of illness, and might be worth checking to see if you can regain your computer's health.

System Restore allows you to roll back most system files, registry keys, and installed programs, the DLL Cache folder, local user profiles, and more. When installed, and not disabled (more about that later) you may manually create a restore point, or use one of the automatically created points. And it does this without affecting your personal files, or data such as e-mail, documents, or photos. We will discuss full backups that include your data in a future article.

Also note that in Vista and later versions it has been improved and now uses "Shadow Copy" Technology with even more backup capabilities.

So where do you look to see if you have any restore points? You should do this today to be sure it is not disabled. Open System Restore by clicking the Start button, clicking All Programs, clicking Accessories, clicking System Tools, and then clicking System Re-

store. Be sure to select "Restore my computer to an earlier time," then click Next.

You will see a calendar of the current month, and several of the dates should be marked in Bold. These dates have restore points available, and some may have more than one as shown below. You may have multiple restore points for several reasons.

Wikipedia lists the Restore points that are created:

- When software is installed using the Windows Installer, Package Installer or other installers which are aware of System Restore.

- When Windows Update installs new updates to Windows.

- When the user installs a driver that is not digitally signed by Windows Hardware Quality Labs.

- Every 24 hours of computer use (10 hours in Windows Me), or every 24 hours of calendar time, whichever happens first. This setting is configurable through the registry or using the deployment tools. Such a restore point is known as a system checkpoint. System Restore requires Task Scheduler to create system checkpoints. Moreover, system checkpoints are only created if the system is idle for a certain amount of time.

- When the operating system starts after being off for more than 24 hours.

- When the user requests it. On Windows Vista, shadow copies created during File Backup and Complete PC Backup can also be used as restore points.

Older restore points are deleted as per the configured space constraint on a First In, First Out basis. [Wikipedia] To begin a restore simply click on the date you want, and then click Next a couple times. Your system will restart and hopefully you have healed the patient.

Database Redux

By Wil Wakely, President, Seniors Computer Group, California
May 2011 issue, Bits and Bytes, The Official Electronic Newsletter of the Seniors Computer Group
www.SCGsd.org wilw(at)adnc.com

About this time last year the Prez article discussed the basics of databases. (See Prez Article Bits & Bytes, March 2010). This subject needs to be addressed again because it is such a powerful computer tool and has become very pervasive in today's culture. The computing power and storage capability of modern computers has so improved that huge databases are being generated and utilized as never before.

So here's a quick recap of what a database is: A single subject such as an address book is broken down into the individual parts (called 'fields') that need to be tracked, such as last name, first name, street address, city, state, zip, phone, etc. For each contact (person, business, etc.) a record is stored with specific information in each field. Now the beauty and power of a database is that each of these fields can be searched and sorted in many different ways. For example, if you want a list of all contacts (records) with last name 'Smith' who live in zip code '92101' and are between the ages of 45 and 55, and have email addresses with AOL, then a single simple search retrieves them in seconds. Excel or Word documents cannot do anything this complicated.

This is how Google can return umpteen thousand hits in milliseconds for some obscure search you have made. Their database is huge and is constantly updated as new sites come on line or old ones are updated. A 'web crawler' program constantly seeks out new Internet information which is immediately added to the giant database. New databases on a plethora of subjects are being created every day which add to the universal information pool, both public and private. Printed encyclopedias are practically obsolete with on-line databases instantly available to all who have access to the Internet. Is the Britannica still published? Recently, I updated some databases that I maintain: Computer CDs, Video tapes and DVDs, Music (LPs, CDs, cassettes, (no longer 8-track)), Xmas lists, Publication subscriptions, Contact lists for various organizations and Collections (art, jewelry, etc.). Pictures can also be stored with each record along with the data. We seniors recall that in the olden days obsessive types spent hours keeping such lists by hand in notebooks, and if they were very large, searching and sorting was a real headache.

There are many database programs available in all price ranges from free on up, depending upon their power. Microsoft provides Access database program in the Office Pro suite. AskSam is a low cost database program that is simple to use and readily available. A Google search will return a list of many database programs. Search for Database Reviews to determine the best one for you. Happy computing!

Older restore points are deleted as per the configured space constraint on a First In, First Out basis. [Wikipedia] To begin a restore simply click on the date you want, and then click Next a couple times. Your system will restart and hopefully you have healed the patient.

If you do not see any restore points, you might want to check that the process is not disabled. To do this in XP you can right click My Computer, open the Properties, and click on the System Restore Tab. There you will see a checkbox where you can "Turn of System Restore on all drives. Be sure that is un-checked. For Win 7 see the FAQ How do I turn System Restore on or off?

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The Seventh Son of Windows — Desktop Gadgets

By Lee Reynolds, Contributing Editor, Boca Raton Computer Society, FL April 2011 issue, Boca Bits www.brcs.org leetutor (at) exploringwindows.com

Introduction

Windows Vista introduced a new feature called the Sidebar, which was a narrow section of your Desktop where you could have small applications running called Gadgets. These Gadgets could be moved out of the Sidebar and anchored somewhere else on your Desktop, if you wished, but still the Sidebar application had to be running.

In Windows 7, there is no longer any Sidebar, but Desktop Gadgets are still present, and you set them up in a new Control Panel applet of the same name. (In Windows Vista, the Sidebar was on by default, whereas in Windows 7 there is no Sidebar and any Gadgets you want must be configured in Control Panel.)

Windows 7 Gadgets

The Gadgets present in Windows 7 are the same as those provided by Vista, with an additional one that is connected to Windows Media Center. These Gadgets are mini-applications designed to use web technology so as to provide real-time access to information of one type or another available through the internet. The built-in Gadgets are these:

- a Calendar application which shows the month, day, year, and day of week. If you click it, you will see the entire month

- a Clock which can be configured to show one of 8 different clock faces and any time zone

- a CPU meter which shows two analog style dials measuring current memory usage and CPU utilization

- a Currency converter

- a Headline Feed of RSS feeds that you are subscribed to via Internet Explorer

- a Media Center gadget that shows a revolving set of links to various parts of Windows Media Center

- a Weather gadget which can be configured for any location in the world

- a Stocks gadget for tracking stocks

- a Picture Puzzle where you slide tiles around against a timer

- a Slide Show gadget for showing the photos you configure for it

Other Gadgets

There are many other Gadgets that can be downloaded from the internet and installed, if you so desire...

Windows 7 Gadget Options

If you click on the Show Desktop area of the Taskbar in Windows 7 (a narrow rectangular area on the extreme right end), then you will see the Desktop with its Gadgets (if any.) In Windows Vista, when you clicked on the Show Desktop icon of the Quick Launch Bar, the Gadgets were not visible.

Gadgets can be shown on your Desktop in Windows 7 even if you are not on line with an internet connection, but they will in this case feature a time stamp which shows how out of date the associated data is. Some of the Gadgets, e.g., the Calendar, can be toggled between various sizes. Some of them have Touch capabilities for those users who have a touch screen attached to their PC.

[NCTCUG Ed. Note: you can also get software to make your own gadgets. Some programs will also install gadgets.]

Microsoft OneNote: Program Stores All Types Of Data

Microsoft's OneNote was one of the subjects discussed by Toby Scott, Channel Islands PCUG Technical Advisor, at their December 2010 program in December.

OneNote has been compared to a three-ring binder as a place to store all types of information in a searchable form. But it's far more useful than just a binder full of paper, as Scott showed in the demonstration.

OneNote first appeared in the Microsoft Office suite in 2003, but not in all versions, he said. It was in most of the versions of Office 2007 and is in all of the 2010 versions, including Home and Student. It is also available as a stand-alone purchase for about $75.

OneNote is the perfect place to store "a tremendous amount of random stuff" in notebooks that can all be examined with a single search, Scott said. Each notebook can have tabs to further divide the information.

Notebooks are listed on the left, and the tabs for a notebook run across the top of the program. Pages can also have sub-pages.

"I probably have 10,000 notes of one kind or another I'd like to be able to get to and some of them I can't find anymore," Scott said. OneNote becomes a central depository for this kind of information, he said.
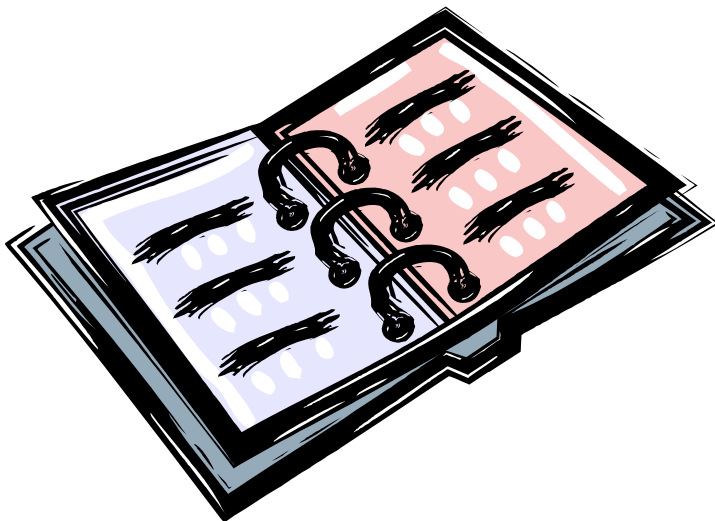
A notebook could cover plans for a trip, he said. When the trip is over and you don't need it anymore, you can delete it with a right click.

The program is quite flexible, he said, because "you can enter data into OneNote almost any way you can get information into a computer." You can cut and paste information, import Word and Excel documents and copy and paste text from an image (for example, a screen shot). Text in an image is searchable.

OneNote wants to tie into SkyDrive, Microsoft's "to the clouds," he said. It gives you 25 Gig of storage but you cannot store files larger than 50 Meg. Stored items can be personal (private) or shared. Users who put information in a shared folder are immediately asked if they want to send e-mails to notify people that the information is there. Anyone can see the shared files, but they can be password-protected to limit access, he said.

It's also possible to copy entire Web sites, and, while the format of the page does not remain, all links remain live. Those who put data in a shared file can give users permission to edit it, but they, not those who visit the shared folder, have the power to limit and grant access permissions.

The cloud version of Office, which includes Word, Excel, PowerPoint and OneNote, can be used from SkyDrive.

Information entered in OneNote is saved immediately so users don't have to remember to save before closing the program.

A search in OneNote looks through all notebooks, lists where the term is found and highlights it in the opened notebook.

Hundreds, if not thousands, of templates are available for OneNote users, including ones for home, school and business. But, Scott noted, "Not all free template downloads are useful."

Free "Cheat Sheets" for Software and Hardware

By Ira Wilsker

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Websites

http://www.makeuseof.com/tag/14-great-cheat-sheets-posters-to-make-you-a-software-wizard

http://www.customguide.com/computer-training/quick-reference

http://learn.customguide.com/index.php?module=QR&action=Inde   (free registration required)

http://www.makeuseof.com/pages

http://www.makeuseof.com/pages/download

http://www.makeuseof.com/tag/7-essential-cheat-sheet

Recently, I was asked to teach an eight hour non-credit class on Excel to the employees of a local company. I know by experience that handouts are a popular adjunct for any class, so I had to find some useful handouts for this Excel class; so called "cheat sheets" are as good as any other handout, so I proceeded to print a set of Excel cheat sheets for Excel versions 2003, 2007, and 2010. The information on those cheat sheets alone was more than adequate for a one-day class, and could have also been used for a longer class.

In this context, a "cheat sheet" is not a device used by a college student in an act of academic dishonesty, but a digital or printed copy of instructions for a software product that clearly explains and shows how to use the features and functions of that product. In addition to the various versions of Microsoft Office, free cheat sheets are available for many other PC, MAC, LINUX, and other computer related software and hardware

products. While most of the free cheat sheets are for software products, some cheat sheets, called by their publisher "Make Use of Guides" (www.makeuseof.com/page) are for hardware and services. Some of the nearly three dozen available include: How To Easily Build Your Own Cheap Computer, The Awesome Automation Guide for Mac Users, The (Very) Unofficial Facebook Privacy Guide, The Office Worker's 101 Guide to a USB Thumb Drive, The Windows 7 Guide: From Newbies To Pros, The Ultimate Guide To Gmail, Your Guide To Create Professional Documents on Word, The Internet Music Guide For The Audiophile, The Essential Guide To Digital Photography, A Newbie's Getting Started Guide to Linux, The Mac Manual, The Underground iPhone Guide, The Big Book Of iTunes, and about 25 other such titles.

One of the best sources of free software cheat sheets is Custom Guide's "Quick References", available online at www.customguide.com/computer-training/quick-reference

On this Quick Reference page are free PDF format cheat sheets for Office 2010, Excel 2010, Outlook 2010, PowerPoint 2010, and Word 2010. With free registration, the user can also access the full collection of Custom Guide's Quick References, including the 2007 and 2003 versions of the Office products, as well as Microsoft's OneNote, Project (2007 and 2003), Publisher, SharePoint, and Visio. There are also Quick References for Windows 7, Vista, and XP. Apple users may also find these Quick Reference Guides useful, as there are guides for Appleworks, MAC OS, Microsoft Entourage, and the Apple versions of Mi-

crosoft Word, Excel, and PowerPoint. Some of the guides for Adobe products are available for both the PC and MAC versions, and include Acrobat, Dreamweaver, Fireworks, Flash, and Photoshop.

Almost all of the Custom Guide's Quick References are of a similar design and format as downloadable PDF files. The guides are in full color, and typically two pages in length. They all display the opening screen of the product with all of the features labeled with a clear and concise explanation of each item. If there is a ribbon or menu bar in the software, the guide labels each function on the image of the item, and presents a summary of the functions in a table adjacent to the image. Most of the products covered by the guides also have a selection of "keyboard shortcuts" displayed that can be used to increase the speed and efficiency of the user by using these shortcuts rather than clicking on menu items. Commonly done tasks like copying something can be accomplished by utilizing the common Windows shortcut CTRL-C, and then pasting the item with CTRL-V; this is much quicker then clicking on the menu and then scrolling to COPY, and repeating the menu process and clicking on PASTE. In many Office products (including competitors to Microsoft Office), formatting can also be done with intuitive shortcuts, such as CTRL-B for bold, CTRL-U for underline, CTRL-I for italics, and several other similar shortcuts; these shortcuts are among the dozens displayed in the Quick Reference guides. The guides also include information (as appropriate) for formatting, graphics, editing, styles, animations, special effects, tables, and other functions of the software. There is a lot of very useful information crammed into these two-page guides, and they would be ideal for all users of these products, regardless of experience level. These are precisely the handouts that I use in my non-credit software classes.

The "MakeUseOf Guides" available free from www.makeuseof.com/page are also downloadable in PDF format. While these guides are free, a one-time registration is necessary to download them. In addition to the "MakeUseOf Guides", there are also dozens of other free guides available for download (free registration required) at www.makeuseof.com/pages/download

Some guides that I have used to learn shortcuts include guides for Firefox, Gmail, Linux, and Internet Explorer. MAC users may find useful the shortcut guides for OS X, and the MAC versions of Firefox. Since its release, I have been using Windows 7 as my primary home computer, and have found "The Ultimate Windows 7 Guide: From Newbies To Pros" a very helpful document. This free 50 page guide (PDF) to Windows 7 is written in an easy to read and understand format, and contains useful information and tips for Windows 7 users of all levels. I have used "The Essential Guide To Digital Photography" to help me with my digital camera, and since it seems that almost everyone today has a digital camera, this guide may be invaluable. I know a lot of people who use Google's Gmail service as their email provider, and the "The Ultimate Guide To Gmail" is 35 pages full of Gmail hints, tips, and ideas. "The Incredible Free Manual For Every Mac User" is a 69 page ebook (PDF) with a treasure trove of information for MAC users. In all, there are 32 such ebooks available.

With all of this free information available for computer users, there should be several titles that would be of interest to just about everyone. I use some of these "cheat sheets" in the classes that I teach, and recommend them as needed to my students and coworkers. You too may find them very useful.
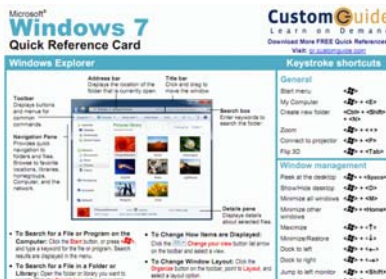
(Continued from page 1)

"o" with "0", or adding a digit or two at its beginning or end add no strength to a password. Bear in mind that most people who can access your Wi-Fi signal are your neighbors, so passwords based on personal information, such as your address, phone number, or pet names are also weak. The best choices are long strings of random characters with mixtures of letters, numbers, and changes of case. Since you have to enter this only when you add a new computer to your network, it isn't important that you be able to remember it.

Insuring privacy when using a public Wi-Fi hot spot is more difficult, since most of these operate with no security. You can dramatically increase security by taking these steps before you leave home.

- Install all the software updates for your system, including the operating system and virus protection programs.

- Install and configure an effective firewall.

- Install Tor, which is available for Windows, Macs, and Linux and read its instructions carefully. (See below.)

- Turn off all file sharing.

- Configure your Wi-Fi service to connect only to preferred networks, in manual (not automatic) mode.

- Change your login password to a strong one.

Once you are at a hotspot, you should take these further steps.

- Ask the hotspot's owner (usually a hotel or restaurant) for its name. Often, your computer will find several signals, and you want to be sure you connect to the right one.

- Turn on Tor. *Note*: some hot spots require that you agree to their terms or use a password to obtain Web access. You will have to turn off Tor to do this; then you can turn it on for the rest of the session.

- If you elect not to use Tor, you can still e-mail safely by using Google's Gmail in its secure (https:/) mode, *but you must configure it properly*. See Google's Web site for more information.

Remember, if you are using a secure connection (one whose address begins with "https://") all traffic is encrypted from end-to-end and is protected, regardless of who can access it en route. However, while using any other type of access, there is a possibility that someone may capture your communication, including any addresses and passwords. You probably can do some casual Web surfing, but you should avoid most other Net activity, including e-mail.

The ultimate protection is to use *Tor*, http://www.torproject.org. While installing and using it isn't difficult, it's beyond the scope of this article; please see the Tor Website for more information. With Tor, all your communication is with a Tor server using a secure connection. The final link is from a different

Washington Area Computer User Group

WACUG Meetings will be held on August 20 & September 17 from 12:30 to 3:30 pm. WACUG will hold joint meetings with **OPCUG** [www.olligmu.org/~opcug/] Meetings will be held at the **Osher Lifelong Learning Institute** [www.olli.gmu.edu/] at George Mason University, 4210 Roberts Road, Fairfax, VA, known as the Tallwood Campus.

You do not need to be a member to attend. For more information on WAC meetings and events, call the WAC AnswerLine (voice) at (703) 370-7649. Also see WAC's Web Site at

http://www.wacug.org/

Election Notice

The NCTCUG Annual Meeting and election will be at the regular club meeting on October 5, 2011, 7 p.m. at Carlin Hall.

All (four to eight) board positions are up for election. Anyone interested in running please contact an officer or board member.

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Tor server to your addressee, and this is not over a secure link. However, you are protected at the hot spot, which is what you are most concerned about. The end result is that using Tor from a hot spot is as secure as using the Internet from home. Tor does require that you use the Firefox Web browser and that you use Firefox for all your Web access. For example, you should access your e-mail through your provider's Web site, not with an e-mail client, such as Outlook. You can configure some Web clients, such as those providing e-mail, instant messaging, Internet relay chat, and FTP, to use Tor, but the procedures can be complex and not available for all operating systems. Again, see the Tor Web site for more information.

Remember to turn off Tor unless you are using an open Wi-Fi router, so that you aren't consuming scarce resources when you don't need them. The Tor network runs on donated equipment and is maintained by volunteers.

[NCTCUG Ed. Note: see the May NCTCUG Journal for article on Tor.]

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Text can be saved from many pictures, such as a screen shot of a DOS box, and copied to another spot in OneNote. A search will find the information in the image whether you've copied it out to text or not (the highlight was hard to see on the DOS screen shot, however). This does not work on heavily artistic graphics, like the CIPCUG logo on the society's Web page, however. "There are limits on what you can pick up," he said.

OneNote also defeats attempts to make copying a Web page impossible, Scott noted. In Vista and Windows 7, you can use the clipping tool to mark the portion of the Web page you want and paste it into OneNote, where it's instantly searchable.

Scott also showed a notebook for work where he stores information on problems that are repetitive but don't come up often enough so fixing them becomes automatic. He stores fix-it information in the

NCTCUG Information

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Directors — all terms expire 2011

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Roger Fujii	
Lorrin Garson	
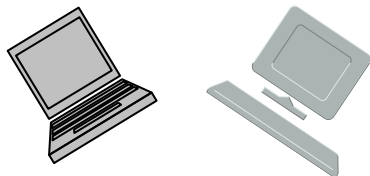
Article Submissions

Articles, helpful hints, and other items of interest to readers of the NCTCUG Journal are always welcome and will be published as soon as possible after submission. Priority is given to members' contributions. Articles may be submitted in MS Word (.doc) or Rich Text Format (.rtf) or plain unformatted text (C/R only at end of paragraphs, no indents preferred) via email to the editor nctcugbj@verizon.net

Membership Policy

The National Capital Technology and Computer Users Group, Inc. is a non-profit [501(c)(3)] organization founded in 1978 to educate users of all Tandy computers and MS-DOS compatible computers. Membership dues are $25.00 (U.S.Funds) per year, with a $5 surcharge for international mail. Membership in NCTCUG includes membership in all SIGs, access to the BBS and software libraries, and subscription to the Journal published 8 times per year. Applications may be obtained at any club meeting, by downloading from the BBS, by calling one of the officers or board members, or by writing to the club. A sample newsletter, membership application and related information may be obtained by enclosing $1 and mailing your request to Jim Rhodes, 201 S. Kensington Street, Arlington VA 22204.

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If you are moving

Please send your change of address to the club address as soon as possible to avoid missing issues.

Thank You!

(Continued from page 15)

notebook and can then search for words matching the problem. He can store registry fixes and similar information, keeping the links live all the time.

Another use, he said, is to gather pricing information from a variety of websites for airline tickets and so on, paste it into OneNote and compare all the data in one place. OneNote also adds a "Pasted from …" tag with information you paste from a website.

OneNote does not pick up CSS formatting and the background images on a Web page so it won't display the information the way you see it on the Web page. Information can also be copied from a PDF file, he said.

Spreadsheets imported from websites are readable, but they don't necessarily import in a spreadsheet format. Scott said that if he wants material from a spreadsheet to be imported into a different spreadsheet, he copies the material into Note Tab Pro. He then does a search for two spaces and replaces them with a tab. He then pastes that material into a spreadsheet, and Excel uses the tabs to create new columns.
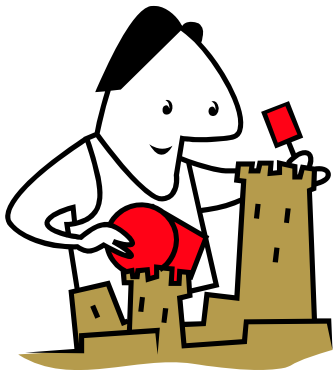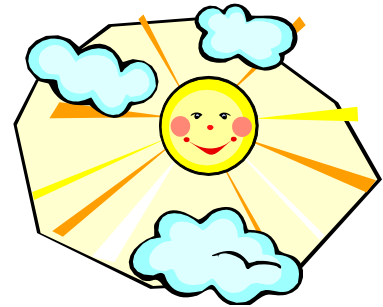
August/September 2011

1st Wed. (8/3, 9/7)
7 p.m. General Meeting

2nd Wed. (8/10, 9/14)
Online-Only Webinar using Skype
for information see club page at
http://www.nctcug.org/webinarsig.html

4th Wed (8/24, 9/28)
7 p.m. Internet SIG

3rd Monday (9/19; none in August)
7 p.m. Board of Directors

Meetings are at **Carlin Hall**, 5711 S. 4th St., Arlington VA: East off of Carlin Springs Rd, just south of Arlington Blvd/Route 50. See website for directions to post-meeting pizza gathering.

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First Class