News for August 2012

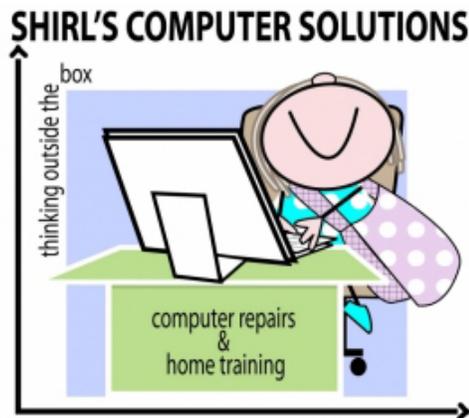# SHIRL'S COMPUTER SOLUTIONS

thinking outside the box

computer repairs & home training

Shirl Crane, Consultant
5 So. Reynolds Street
Scotia, NY 12302
(518) 393-4351
e-mail: shirl@shirlscomputersolutions.com

Can you believe that we're into August already? The summer is flying by, and before you know it we'll be looking at the fall colors on the trees! This month, on the 28th, John and I celebrate our 47th Wedding Anniverary. Last year hurricane Irene arrived on our anniversary - that's one anniversary we'll never forget ☹   A visit from our son, John who lives in Prague Czech Republic, was the highlight of July for us.   It's the first time in a long time that all the family has been together. We have a lot to be thankful for!

It's been another month full of news and exciting finds for apps and interesting websites. I'll start with a simple way to add a website to your taskbar! (the bar at the bottom of your desktop screen)

Sometimes there's a website that you go to all the time and it's a nusiance to try and find it, or it's a hassle go through the steps to open it up. If you use Internet Explorer you can easily add it to the taskbar. Just open up the website and click on the icon next to the web address (it's to the left of the address) and drag it down to the taskbar. It will say pin to taskbar. Drop it there and you're all set! You can do this with your on-line email accounts, favorite sports calendar or TV show. Any place that you visit all the time can be just a single click away! Remember that the taskbar icons only need one click to open!

For those of you with laptops, this might be helpful for you to know. It's now been found that if you leave your laptop plugged in all the time that you should remove the battery. The battery keeps overcharging and will lose it's capability to hold a charge after a while. And to save on your battery life try lowering the brightness level of your laptop's display.   Depending on your laptop, you may be able to get as much as an extra hour of runtime, simply by lowering the brightness. Lowering the screen resolution and color depth can help too, since these things can decrease the workload on the GPU. Go to Start, Control Panel, Display to change these settings. Other features, such as ClearType fonts and fade effects can consume CPU power; disabling these features can help extend your battery life, too. Go to Start, Control Panel, System,

Advanced, Performance Settings to make these changes.

On the security front, this article should be read if you use Facebook or Gmail. It seems that Facebook is being targeted with a number of scams, and this one you need to be aware of.   Be sure to run a Virus/Malware scan on your computer to make sure you don't have it already. ☹ http://facecrooks.com/Scam-Watch/new-malware-attack-aims-to-steal-credit-card-information-after-login-facebook-gmail-users-at-risk.html

We talk about spam and junk mail on the computer, but what about the mail you receive in your "snail-mail" mailbox? This website will let you opt out of the catalogs, flyers and solicitations that come through the USPS.   It's about time! https://www.catalogchoice.org/dashboard

If you're into camping and want to find a different place to go this summer, this website might be just what you're looking for.
http://www.wecamphere.com/Campground/CampgroundMap.aspx

iPad or iPhone users….. I have a few apps that might interest you. I just got an iPad about a month ago and am already filling it up with wonderful apps and a lot of them are free! If you have Time Warner Cable, you can download TWC TV and watch TV on your iPad. It's easy to use and it's free. The weather channel also has a free app. (TWC). You can set it up for multiple locations and the graphics are really nice with a variety of maps. You can even download an app that's a police scanner. It's called 5.0 Radio and that too is free. I have to admit that I found an app that was perfect for me and it identifies butterflies and birds. The photos are amazing and it also has the bird calls. It's called Audubon and runs around $8.00. It's worth every penny! If you have an app you'd like to share, let me know what it is and I'll pass it along in the next newsletter.

Microsoft is offering a new email service. It's still in beta testing, but you can sign up for an account now. It's called Outlook.com It's supposed to replace Hotmail and the reviews are very good for it.
http://www.pcworld.com/article/260192/microsoft_outlookcom_a_hands_on_first_look.html

Also, we're getting closer to the time when Windows 8 will be on the market. You can get that upgrade that I mentioned around Oct 26th and it will be about $40. That's only good until Jan, so don't wait to long to order it if you're interested in the new operating system. Here's a link to let you check it out.   Enjoy! http://windows.microsoft.com/en-US/windows-8/consumer-preview-videos

Ok, so this is way before any of us were born, but it might be fun to look at.
 http://www.silentera.com/   Silent Screen films can be fun to watch, and it shows us just how far we've come in the movie industry.

Whatever your plans for this month, enjoy. Also make sure that you update your computers with all the latest security .dat files and keep the machines off in the severe weather.

FYI, I've just added a new service to my business. I scan old slides and negatives and put them

on disc. ☺ Editing is also available.

Take Care,

Shirl

<http://www.shirlscomputersolutions.com/>