SHIRL'S COMPUTER SOLUTIONS

thinking outside the box

computer repairs & home training

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Isn't it amazing how we've jumped from winter into summer? Hopefully all of you were safe during the recent storms and haven't had major cleanup to do.

AOL

There are many things to tell you about this month, so let's get started with my favorite……"STOP Paying for AOL!!" For years I've told people that if you have broadband (Verizon, Time Warner or any digital subscriber line service) you don't have to keep paying that monthly charge to AOL. It's probably the biggest rip-off that I know of where they never notified people that it's free if you don't have dial-up! You can call them to switch over or just do it through the software on your computer. You'll end up saving well over $100 a month! Spread the word and let your friends know. In this economy we can't afford to throw away money….especially on something that's "free".

Last month Tom Windish wrote to tell me that he had read that changes are in the works for the Windows 8 Operating system. He was right! Come the end of the year they'll be releasing "Windows Blue" (now to be called Windows 8.1) which will address numerous complaints from users. The number one complaint? "The missing Start button"….something that has had many people confused and frustrated. The update will be free, but at first they had planned to charge for the update which didn't settle well with consumers. Reports show that so far Windows 8 is only on 4 percent of computers…..they're just not selling.

 So, one more time I'll remind you that if you have an older computer and I mean one that's between 4 and 6 years old, it's time to buy Windows 7 before it's gone forever. The average life of a PC is about 5 years.   I called HP the other day and they said that by the end of July they expect that all the Windows 7 machines will be gone. If you just want to ask me questions about this, please feel free to email or call me. Please read this article!
http://www.nbcnews.com/technology/microsoft-retools-windows-8-address-gripes-6C9813861

April 8, 2014 is the end of life date for Windows XP. ☹

After April 8, 2014, Microsoft won't provide any security updates for XP. That means any security flaws that hackers find won't be fixed. Your computer will be a sitting duck.
(In Microsoft's defense, it extended XP's "end of life" date several times due to its popularity. It really should have ended years ago.)
Plus, once Microsoft stops supporting XP, other companies will follow suit. It takes a lot of time and money to make sure programs and hardware work on all the versions of Windows out there.
If you do use Windows XP after April 2014, it's basically at your own risk.
Having security software installed will help, but it will get more and more dangerous to use as time goes on.
I don't recommend using a Windows XP computer as your main computer after next April. You will want to start using a new operating system. If you plan to stick with Windows, that means upgrading to 7 or 8.
Windows 7 is the closest in look and feel to XP. In fact, it's shaping up to replace XP as the operating system that people will be using as long as they can.

I saw this article on the Internet and thought it was worth sending out. It's about the iPad 2 and how it can effect people who have heart problems….no joke! It's worth reading!
http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2013-05-09/heart-patient-risk-from-ipad2-found-by-14-year-old.html

Facebook can be a wonderful way to keep in touch with friends and family, and reports now say that the younger people would rather post on Facebook than email. That's no surprise! The question that I always hear is, "Is it safe?" The answer is simple. You're connected to the Internet and sharing all kinds of personal information, so not really.

That's why you need to take precautions. Here's an example of what could be going on with your FB account:

You've just discovered your Facebook account has been posting all kinds of weird, pornographic, or generally inappropriate content to your Wall and/or News Feed. Your friends are annoyed with all the questionable posts and requests coming from you.
So what's happening? It could be a virus or you've been hacked! So now what do you do? Here's a few tips to keep you safe.
Always log out of Facebook when you're signed in on someone else's machine, and if you can't login to Facebook any longer follow these instructions Facebook Help Center. If you feel that you've been hacked, change your Password and remove unwanted Facebook Apps. Last but not least, run a security program like Malwarebytes to remove any infections. I recommend that you change your password often with FB. It's too easy for hackers to find out your passwords, so make sure that you use one that has symbols, numbers and letters. (and write it down so you don't forget what it is!)

Is there anything worse than flight delays and sitting at the airport for someone to arrive or for you to leave? I'm sure that this isn't the flight you'll be taking, but before you leave for the airport check out this website. You can even download apps for this from the app store. ☺
http://flightcaster.com/

Ever hear of typohound? I found this link for deals on eBay. People don't always use their spellchecker and items get posted on eBay with typos. This could be to your advantage. Try this website and follow the instructions. I tried it and it works!
http://www.typohound.com/

I think that my daughter's Theresa & Colleen are going to love this one. If you like to save money, check out these 5 MUST have coupon apps.
- o Valpak Local Savings (Free; iOS, Android)
- o SnipSnap Coupon App (Free; iOS)

- RetailMeNot (Free; iOS, Android)
- SavingStar (Free; iOS, Android)
- Coupons.com (Free; iOS, Android)

What I really found to be exciting is this plug-in for your browser (IE, Firefox or Chrome) Whenever I shop on-line I look for coupon codes to enter at checkout. They can save you money off your order or often you can get free shipping. Once you install it, any website that asks for a coupon code will automatically be found and available for you to use. Here's the link to install it.
http://couponfollow.com/checkout

Now for Mac users. Printing can be a problem when you're using a Windows/Mac setup. If you want to print from your iPad, this might be the app that will work for you.

Apple's AirPrint is an awesome feature, but it doesn't work with many printers. If you don't have the recommended gear, you can still print from your iPhone or iPad, though.Use **Print n Share**. It prints documents to most wireless printers. It even supports some wired printers as long as they're on your wireless network. It's a great solution to your AirPrint woes.
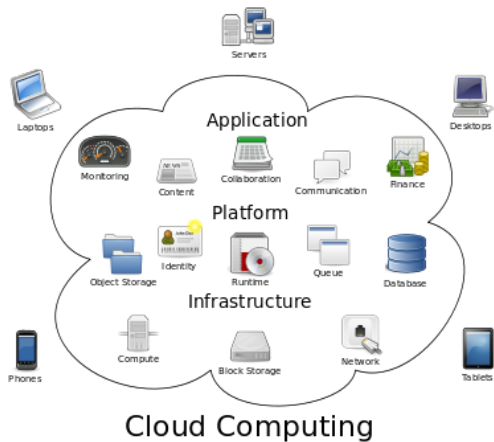
Cost: $8 from the iTunes store

And if you're like us, you always wonder how a restaurant is before you're handed the menu and look at the specials they offer and their prices.   This website gives Honest Reviews. Just type in the name of the city where you live and it will give all kinds of information. http://www.dishtip.com/

I have your ComputerTerm of the month!

Cloud Computing

Cloud Computing

Cloud computing refers to applications and services offered over the Internet. These services are offered from data centers all over the world, which collectively are referred to as the "cloud." Examples of cloud computing include online backup services, social networking services, and personal data services such as Apple's MobileMe. Cloud computing also includes online applications, such as those offered through Microsoft Online Services.

 One "Cloud" application that you can put on your computer is Dropbox. This is a great program that lets you share your files from computer to computer. Download and install it on iPad, tablets, desktop computers, iPhone and Androids and laptops. The link is here. I use it all the time and it's a time saver and easy to use.   And it's free with up to 2 GB of storage. http://download.cnet.com/Dropbox/3000-18500_4-10903856.html?tag=mncol;2

Last but not least, here's one of my favorite videos of this month. Enjoy!

http://www.lifewithdogs.tv/2011/11/military-reunions-with-mans-best-friend/

Have a good month!

Shirl