

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

## *Happy St Patrick's Day*

*March 12, 2012*

*With Spring so close at hand, it's time to think of opening the Windows (no pun intended) and getting the gazebo ready so we can sit and watch the birds in the yard. I think we're all ready for some sunshine and warm weather! I just brought in the first crocus that was in full bloom and took some nice macro shots of it! ☺*

*Thinking "Spring Cleaning" shouldn't be for just the house, it should also include checking your desktop computer to make sure it's cleaned up so that it's healthy. No matter how well we clean, our computers are subject to dust and that's one of the biggest enemies of the PC. A few simple tasks will keep the machine safe from fire....Yes fire! Keep a can of compressed air in your maintenance plan. ALWAYS make sure that your computer is turned off /unplugged before you start cleaning, and then hold the can about a foot away from the back of the machine and blow the dust out of the back of your tower. The cooling fan is there, and if this becomes plugged with dirt it will make your PC overhead. Clean around the USB ports and the DVD drive also. If you're really brave, open the tower and blow the dust out of there too. I hesitate to tell you to vacuum the inside because you could inadvertently take a few of the pieces off the Motherboard....Not Good! ☹ Also, use the canned air on your keyboard. Just turn it upside down and spray the air into the areas around the keys. Remember that the keyboard is a breeding ground for germs, so take a Clorox Wipe about once a week and clean the keys. Make sure that it's rung out of excess moisture before you use it. One last thing, never use canned air or Windex on your Flat Panel Screens or laptop screens. I use a soft cloth that is used to clean camera lenses and just dampen it to get fingerprints and dust off the screen. As for the laptops? Clean the ventilation areas of the machine and ports. No need to open it up and clean inside, but the keyboard needs the same TLC!*

*I've had a couple of questions this month that I'd like to address. One is about backups. It's critical that you do this on a regular basis because hard drives will fail without warning. Once the drive is dead, chances are that you won't be able*

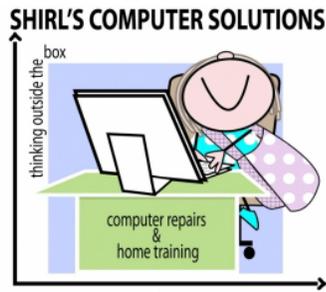
*to get any information from them unless you pay a professional service to retrieve it. That could run into hundreds if not thousands of dollars! I have been using Carbonite now for over a year and now I don't have to worry about losing my personal information, photos, music or home movies anymore. Everything is backed up, and they automatically back up new files whenever they're detected. They always offer a trial period for their service and for \$59 a year it gives you peace of mind. They don't backup external hard drives, so you have to make sure that any files you want copied are on your machine. If this isn't an option for you, backup to a DVD, or external Hard Drive. People always say "I'll do it tomorrow", but tomorrow might be too late to preserve those important files. Do it now!*

*Another issue has been Discs for your operating system. Did you notice that they don't include them with your computer anymore? That's because they expect you to burn your own copies which they call recovery discs. You also need to burn a startup disc and these should be burned as soon as you get the computer. If you don't, and your computer needs to be repaired you'll have to resort to buying another copy of Windows. ☹ If you try to reinstall from the partition on your drive where they keep these files, and they're infected from a virus, you'll just keep reinstalling the virus over and over again. Worse yet? They'll all be corrupted. Make that a priority! If you haven't done it yet and everything is working well on your computer, make yourself a cup of tea and spend about an hour burning discs this evening. ☺*

*It's been another busy month with all kinds of things to share. I'll bet everyone is excited about "The New iPad" . Word has it that Apple is going to take over the computer business with this little piece of technology. As for Windows? Windows 8 is in beta right now and the reports are that it "looks like a Mac, but is far from being in the same ballpark as their competitor". Here's a link for you to check it out. Read the comments on the page. I think you'll get the idea!*

[http://www.pcworld.com/article/250909/windows\\_8\\_consumer\\_preview\\_a\\_visual\\_tour.html#tk.hp\\_pop](http://www.pcworld.com/article/250909/windows_8_consumer_preview_a_visual_tour.html#tk.hp_pop)

*I'm sure that you've all heard in the news that Kodak is in bankruptcy proceedings. They've decided to stay in the printing end of the business and to also produce printers. What a shame; a company that founded the film industry is bowing out of making digital cameras because they never believed that digital would "catch on". I heard this week that if you've stored your photos on their Kodak Gallery that you should get your pictures off. It's not definite, but they might be closing the site. I wouldn't wait to take them down or get an archive DVD.*



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<http://www.guardian.co.uk/business/2012/feb/09/kodak-to-stop-making-cameras>

*I have a couple of free tips to pass along to you....*

*If anyone has a Kindle, you can download a Kindle App to put on your Windows PC or Mac. That way you can also read your books on your Tablets or iPads. That's really a nice touch! You can also get some free e-books from public domain at this site*

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*And, do you wish you could make some extra money from home? Check out Kim Komando's website of "legitimate" places to look for work. Just typing in a Google search "Work at Home" will bring all the scammers out of the woodwork. Remember, anyone who asks you for money when you inquire for this type of work is just scamming you. <http://www.komando.com/tips/index.aspx?id=825>*

### *Tip of the Month*

*If nothing else in this newsletter has been of interest, this should be. Before you click on a link, make sure it's safe. This YouTube Video will show you how to make sure you're not being lured into a dangerous website.*

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-aay-00BCKE&feature=youtu.be>

*Have a good month, and enjoy the nice weather!*

*Shirl*

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