September 2015 Newsletter

It's that time again...summer's making a curtain call, and fall is ready to take center stage. I don't know where the past few months have gone, but John & I are looking forward to September when we'll be taking a vacation to Cape Cod to celebrate our 50th wedding anniversary!

Well, we might just as well get right to the main issue. Windows 10 – you either love it or have a "love hate" relationship with it. Right now my business has picked up, and it's all Windows 10 machines that I'm getting calls about or they're being dropped off at my house to be fixed. I sent you some information and told you to **wait** until you upgrade, but I think that a little more information is in order. New info is coming out all the time as people are running into all kinds of issues. Below I'll try to sort it out for you.

Battery life

Battery life on a laptop is usually an issue whenever there's a new OS update in town, but this doesn't seem to have been a huge problem with Windows 10. If you are seeing faster drains on your hardware, check with the manufacturer to see if there's a firmware or driver fix available that better optimizes the hardware to match the demands of Windows 10. The regular updates that Windows 10 downloads and installs in the background can have a detrimental effect on battery life: If the charge level seems to be falling fast, updates may be to blame, so if you ride out the initial flurry of patches then you might find that battery life gets better rather than worse.

Default apps

One of the issues that I find annoying is that Windows 10 is removing the default file associations that we put in place in Windows 7 or 8.1, so double-clicking on a picture file opens up Windows' own image application rather than something a lot more useful. This seems to happen even if you tell the upgrade installer to leave them alone. It's an annoyance but it's not hard to fix: Launch the Settings app from the taskbar, click System and then choose Default apps. Alternatively, right-click on a file in File Explorer, choose Open with and then Choose another app. Tick the box marked "Always use this app" as you pick out a new program.

Buggy or broken software

Windows 10 has been in its testing phase for **a long, long time now**, but there are still some applications that won't like working with it (particularly older ones). If this applies to you, your best bet is to keep checking for updates to the program in question until a fix rolls out—try checking the app forums or contacting the developer directly. Compatibility Mode is still present and correct in Windows 10, so you can try that too: Right-click on an executable, choose Properties and open the Compatibility tab. From there, you're able to get the

program in question running as if it were using a different version of Windows. It's not guaranteed to work but it might help. Don't be surprised if some programs never list an update for their software. I know that if I upgrade to Windows 10 a few of my favorite programs bite the dust. I'm not ready to give them up yet, so you know that I'll be sticking with Windows 7 on all but one of my machines. ☺

Touchpad woes

Other issues relate to trackpads, which isn't altogether unexpected: The delicate calibration of this input device is always likely to get thrown off by a major OS update. Unfortunately, there's not much you can do until your laptop maker or Microsoft gets around to issuing a patch. Heading to the forums of the manufacturer in question and venting your frustration "may" get the process moving a little faster and has the added benefit of letting others know that they're not alone. Uninstalling and reinstalling the current touchpad drivers (via Device Manager in Control Panel) may also help get the device working again.

Reboot loops after updating

One of the most recent updates pushed out by Microsoft caused a large proportion of users to get stuck in a reboot loop—it seems that Microsoft hasn't quite perfected the update and patch process yet. If you're comfortably hacking around in the registry, there is a method for fixing it and getting your computer working again. For the rest of us, it's just a question of being patient until Microsoft's engineers can solve the problem on their end—you can expect more of these kind of problems in the future, especially in the early days of Windows 10. If you want to disable mandatory updates for Windows 10 then there is a way, but it's not particularly pretty. ☹

Dealing with other problems

With so many different configurations of hardware and software out there, it's hard to provide specific troubleshooting advice, but uninstalling and reinstalling apps and devices works as well as it ever has—it forces Windows to start from scratch with your programs and peripherals. New updates for Windows 10 are rolling out every day, so it may just be a question of waiting for the right patch or driver update. The main recovery options haven't changed very much from Windows 8.1: **From the Settings app go to Update & security and then Recovery. Under Reset this PC you can restore Windows 10 back to its original settings while keeping or erasing your files, while the full reinstall option is under Advanced startup. For a month after you upgrade there's an option to go back to your previous version of Windows too.**

Now if you're a techy, I'm sure you loved the above information. For everyone else, you know where I live! ☺

I found an app that I think some of you might like. It's called Glo and it's a Bible App. I've seen a lot of them, but this one is **really nice**. The "free version" has a lot of features including Bible book and chapter, Maps, Photos, a place for notes and is in NIV or KJV. The paid version has all the extras…videos, articles, tours and thousands more photos. It's available for Windows or Mac.
www.Globible.com/gloforpc/ or   http://www.globible.com/gloformac/

 Free can be good! This list of free programs from Kim Komando is sure to have something for everyone. I'm just copying the page so you can click on the links to go directly to these sites. A description will

help you to know what the program is for and the name and price of the original software is shown at the end of the description.

Free alternatives to pricey software

It used to be that if you wanted quality software you had to pay for it. Not so anymore. There are now dozens, perhaps even hundreds, of free software programs that rival their paid counterparts. Here are some of my favorites.
Microsoft Office ($120 to $500)
LibreOffice - This free productivity suite contains a word processor, spreadsheet program, presentation software and much more. Even better, it can open your Microsoft Office documents and save them in Office formats. Microsoft Publisher ($140)
Scribus - This is a great free tool for creating brochures, magazines and newsletters – and just about any other print publications. It contains all the features you need to turn your ideas into published reality.
Microsoft Outlook ($110)
Thunderbird - This powerful, lightweight email program makes creating and organizing email a snap. Use the Lightning extension to add a powerful calendar feature.
Adobe Acrobat ($300)
PDF creation and editing programs - Need a PDF file for work or another project? Use these great programs to create and edit PDF files for free.
QuickBooks Pro/Quicken ($230/$30)
GnuCash - Don't spend a lot of money for software to manage the money you have left after buying these programs. This powerful free accounting software lets you handle personal or business finances with ease.
AceMoney Lite - Looking to track your personal finances? This helpful program has you covered with investment tracking and bill reminders.
Adobe Photoshop ($670)
Gimp - Like Photoshop, this free program can handle digital art, photo editing, website design and much more. It may not have some of

Photoshop's most advanced features, but it is free and all many people will need.

[Artweaver](#) - Photoshop is a favorite of digital artists because of its versatile brush system. Get the same flexibility with this great free art program.

Adobe Illustrator ($580)

[Inkscape](#) - Vector graphics are a staple of logo and Web design. Create top-notch vector images with this powerful free program.

Adobe Lightroom ($300)

[RAWTherapee](#) - For high-quality photos, many photographers shoot in RAW format. This program gives plenty of editing tools for turning your RAW files into quality finished products.

Maya ($3,500)

[Blender](#) - Interested in 3-D computer modeling? Look no further than this powerful, free modeling program. It contains all the tools you need to make 3-D models, scenes, animations and even games.

Adobe Premier Elements/Premier ($100/$800)

[Live Movie Maker](#) - Even personal home videos can benefit from some editing. This simple program lets you arrange your video, add sound, create credits and more.

[Lightworks](#) - Want to take your videos to new heights? This free, professional video-editing software was good enough to be used on last year's Oscar-winning movie, *The King's Speech*.

iTunes (Free)

[Songbird](#) - Sure iTunes is a free, capable media organizer. However, it doesn't work well with non-Apple products. Instead, use Songbird. It supports more file types, can import iTunes libraries and handles more types of media players.

Sibelius ($600)

[MuseScore](#) - Need to whip out some music notation for your band? Maybe you need simple exercise worksheets for a music class. This free music notation program has you covered.

Norton Internet Security 2012 ($70)

[Security software](#) - You don't have to spend a bundle to get good

computer security. Visit my Security Center for lots of excellent, free alternatives.

If you find that you have a new toolbar in your browser called **"Ask",** I'm sure that they didn't ASK you if they could install it. This toolbar is considered malware and is often referred to as a browser hijacker. (taking you to websites you didn't want to go to). If you're running the Avast Anti-Virus, they have a browser cleaner tool that will help you remove it. If you don't have Avast, go to the control panel and manually remove it.

B&H is one of my favorite websites to go to for photography, and this month they sent me an email with photography tips. It's worth checking out no matter what level of photographer you are. http://link.bandh.com/YesConnect/HtmlMessagePreview?a=3DHN rev1AXZZAYGjc99wNj

Now that you've taken all those wonderful photos you'll want to make sure that you keep them safe. **One thing you need to remember to do is back up all your important files on your computer which includes your photos.** Remember when we went to the store and had our "film" developed? When we got our photos back we also had **"negatives"** included with our photographs. That was our **"backup"** so that if we needed more copies we could easily return to the store with a negative in hand. Those days are gone! With our digital cameras we can take amazing pictures, and we don't have the expense of buying film and developing them. As a result we're taking more photos and can print out the ones we really want. Our computers have become our digital

darkroom for editing, and we need to create our own "negatives".....and that is accomplished by backing up our photos. You have some options below on how to do this.

- You can burn them to a DVD, save them to a flash drive or save them on an external drive.
- The other option is to store them in the cloud. I use Carbonite to backup all my files and my over 200,000 photos. For a fee you can save all your files and have peace of mind.
- You can use "free Photo Storage" which includes the following:
    - Unlimited Photo Storage with Amazon Prime
    - Shutterfly (and they never delete your photos)
    - Dropbox
    - Google Photos – this app if for your iPhone and iPad
    - Flickr
    - Apple iCloud

 Computer Term of the Month – Byte, Kilobyte, Megabyte, Gigabyte, etc

Ever wonder what it means when it says you have a 500 "GB" Hard Drive, or 1 "TB" for a flash drive? We'll you're in luck! This website tells you the breakdown of computer storage. And ya gotta love the name of their website!
☺ http://www.computerhope.com/issues/chspace.htm

That's the latest! I hope you have had a wonderful summer and that you have an enjoyable and safe Labor Day weekend. Just so you know, I'll be away from September 9th through the 17th. If you want to schedule an appointment leave a message on my answering machine and I'll get back to you. ☺

Warm Regards,

Shirl