Interface

Tuesday
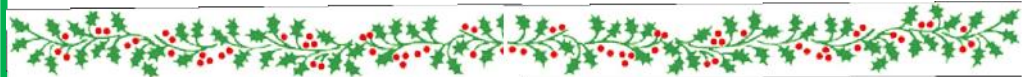**December 14, 2010**

LCCUG ANNUAL HOLIDAY PARTY

&

CHINESE RAFFLE

2010

Donations go to the Second Harvest Food Bank

Monthly Meetings Held At Gould Auditorium
2nd Floor, St. Joseph Community Center, Lorain, OH
5:30 PM Doors Open With Outer Lobby Q & A Sessions
6:45 PM Meeting & Presentation Begins

A Word From Our President

Somehow we are at the end of a year already! How does this happen?

As I look back on this year the trends that have developed have found us working more in the "cloud". In doing so we are using programs that are not on our computers but accessed from the Internet. I find that I have come to favor services that I can access this way. It may not be for everyone but I like it. Recently, I wanted a program to help me organize some books I have and I found a program that you buy to download to your computer that makes doing this simple. Then I looked at some online programs that I could use to build my database of titles. I ended up using one of the online programs. One of the reasons that swayed me, included being able to access the collection list online and from any computer or computing device.

I also opted for a backup service that automatically backs up all my files to the Internet. As soon as I save a file to my computer, it is almost instantly marked as backed up. I am going to try this for a year and see if it is worthwhile. So far it is VERY handy. My data is regularly backed up to the "cloud", in spite of myself!!

Another trend I see coming faster and faster is the use of mobile devices. Did you know that a Smart Phone (iPhone, Android, Windows 7 phone) has more computing power than your desktop computer probably had 5 years ago. The younger users are moving more and more to this medium. Many of them don't aspire to own a computer. They are happy to email, text, read, listen and Google right there on their phone. More and more websites and services will be shaping themselves to accommodate this.

An industry analyst recently projected 3.5 million tablets (including the iPad and other tablets) to be sold this year, growing to 20.4 million in 2015. Meanwhile, she expects desktop sales to drop from 18.7 million units in 2010 to 15.7 million units in 2015.

At first the smaller netbooks showed that users want more portability. And then, thanks to the success of the Apple iPad, it is believed that the onslaught of tablet devices will lead to the next computer revolution.

This portability trend goes hand in hand with working in the cloud. Those who want their computers with them at all times want to access their information easily and having it stored on the cloud is ideal!

There is also the extraordinary appeal of the iPads which have dazzled many who were not previously drawn to a device they can hold so easily and carry with them so conveniently.

Another trend I am personally drawn to is eBook readers! There are several popular dedicated devices out there now just for reading eBooks. For instance, the Kindle from Amazon has a huge popularity. You can also read books on ANY of the portable devices or computers mentioned earlier, but the eBook readers are primarily just for reading books and do an excellent job of that. Imagine the effect this is having on publishing and libraries and bookstores. Who would have thought?!!

The other trend is of course "social networking" such as Facebook and the social networking feature being added to most all other programs. Everything is becoming "participatory" – we all get a chance to comment and share our ideas – for better or for worse!

I can barely imagine what we will be seeing next year! What will I be talking about in another 12 months? Things change so rapidly!! It is an amazing time to live in.

Sandee

LCCUG ANNUAL HOLIDAY PARTY

&

CHINESE RAFFLE

2010

Donations go to the Second Harvest Food Bank

Come and enjoy a fun evening Bring a friend

Executive Board Meeting Minutes

NOVEMBER 2, 2010

Attending were Sandee Ruth, Carole Doerr, Don Hall, Micky Knickman, Pam Rihel, Dennis Smith and Kaye Coller.

Carole will print another 100 LCCUG Membership flyers and 10 more advertiser contracts.

The board felt the mini lesson before the meeting has been well received, so it will continue.

When severe weather requires cancellation of a meeting, an e-mail notice will be sent to the membership.

Carole was given a check for our participation in the MetroParks' Adopt-A-Raptor program.

Carole will make a write-up on the CERT Program, (Community Emergency Response Team), to see if any in the membership are interested in participating.

The annual picnic date has been set for July 17, 2011 at Lakeview Park.

The December board meeting will be at Eat 'N Park.

Dennis moved, Pam seconded the meeting be adjourned.

General Meeting Minutes

NOVEMBER 23, 2010

President Sandee Ruth called the meeting to order. A motion to accept the minutes as shown in the November issue of the *INTERFACE* was made by John Dunn, seconded by Pam Rihel. Motion passed.

Sandee reminded members of the December meeting where we are asked to donate money (preferred) or canned goods for Second Harvest, brings items for the white elephant raffle, and the annual election of officers.

She mentioned FREEGAL MUSIC service which is available to those who have a Lorain Library Card issued from Lorain Library. Under FREEGAL MUSIC you can download 3 songs a week free!

Pam Rihel presented her program on Genealogy. She compared Family Tree Maker 2010 and RootsMagic 4. She showed the many types of charts available from both programs and which programs would allow pictures within the charts. She also had many printed handouts available.

Lorna Middendorf won the first software raffle and Pam Rihel won the money raffle.

Joe Harrold moved, Micky Knickman seconded the meeting be adjourned.

Pam Rihel **LadyGeneo@roadrunner.com**

Genealogy & How to Begin

Information Source:
General Services Administration
National Archives and Records Service
Washington, DC 20408

Unless you are a king or a president or other notable, finding your ancestors and making sure a "family tree" is kept for future generations may be up to you. The Federal Government does not do family research, nor do its agencies or the National Archives collect or preserve family trees. Books on family history and genealogy are compiled and published by individuals or family groups who do so because they are interested in discovering and preserving their family history.

As the depository of the Federal Government's records deemed of permanent value for historical purposes, the National Archives houses many records that can be helpful to persons who wish to trace their ancestry. The search, however, cannot be completed at the National Archives. Other depositories must be visited. Following are suggestions about what you can do to find your ancestors:

START WITH YOURSELF
You are the beginning "twig" on your family tree. Start with yourself, the known, and work toward your unknown "roots." Find out the vital information about your parents, write it down, and then look for data about your grandparents, great-grandparents, etc.

NAMES, DATES, PLACES, RELATIONSHIPS
You will be concerned with pulling from the many and varied documents of recorded history four key items: *names, dates, places, and relationships.* These are the tools of the family researcher. People can be identified in records by their names, the dates of events in their lives (birth, marriage, death) the places they lived, and by relationships to others either stated or implied in the records.

HOME SOURCES
The place to begin is at home. Here you will find much information in family bibles, newspaper clippings, military certificates, birth and death certificates, marriage licenses, diaries, letters, scrapbooks, backs of pictures, baby books, etc.

RELATIVES AS SOURCES
Visit or write those in your family who may have information, particularly older relatives. More often than not others before you have already gathered family data. You should make a letter, personal visit, and telephone survey to find out about such persons and what information is already collected.

FINDING DISTANT RELATIVES
Before launching your research program in libraries and archives, search for *distant* relatives who may have already performed research. Advertise your family interests in the national, regional, and local genealogical magazines. Such periodicals are usually available in public libraries.

CHURCH RECORDS
A few churches have records of important events in the lives of members but many do not. Investigate the possibility of finding genealogical data in the records of the church to which your ancestor belonged.

BIRTH, MARRIAGE, AND DEATH RECORDS
Some States began to keep records of birth and death earlier, but for most of the United States, birth and death registration became a requirement around the turn of the century, about 1890-1915. Before that time these events will be found recorded generally only in church records and family bibles. Marriages will be found recorded in most *counties,* dating often as early as the establishment of the county.

DEEDS AND WILLS
Records of property acquisition and disposition can be good sources of genealogical data. Such records are normally in the county courthouses. Often the earliest county records or copies of them are also available in State Archives.

FEDERAL RECORDS
The National Archives in Washington, D.C., has records of use in genealogical research. The Federal Census made every 10 years since 1790 is a good source. The Census records are also available on microfilm in the National Archives regional archives branches located in 11 metropolitan areas throughout the country. The National Archives also has military service and related records, passenger arrival records, and others.

LIBRARIES, SOCIETIES, ARCHIVES
Visit the State, regional, and local institutions in your area. Libraries, historical and genealogical societies, and archival depositories are all good sources for genealogical and family history data. Be sure to find out what books are available on how-to-do genealogical research.

Nominations for Officers & Elections

As usual we will elect a slate of officers at our Holiday meeting that will be held on December 14 this year. NOW is the time to prepare that slate of officers.

Current officers have all agreed to run for an office again next year. Any member is welcome to run for any office, but we are particularly in need of a Director of Public Relations and a Director of Advertising.

If you are free on the first Tuesday evening of the month for the officer's meeting and you can attend most meetings, please email me or one of the officers with your interest and/or questions.

We have ONE person from our existing board of officers to run for each position except Director of Public Relations and Director of Advertising. If you might be interested in one of those positions, speak up now! (See the description below).

The DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC RELATIONS shall be responsible for all appropriate communications, public relations, marketing and promotional activities to increase public awareness of LCCUG, serve on the Media Committee working to coordinate the publicity and promotion of LCCUG.

The DIRECTOR OF ADVERTISEMENT shall Establish and coordinate the activities of the Advertising Committee, oversee the rules governing advertising rates, contracts, policies, and guidelines. Be responsible for seeing that advertisements for publication are received by the Newsletter Editor in a timely fashion, & Procure Sponsors.

For current officers: **http://lccug.com/nofficers.html**
For descriptions of all officer positions see the club by-laws - **http://www.lccug.com/nbylaws.html**

Reminder - check out upcoming meeting information at : **http://lccug.com** and read our newsletters at **http://lccug.com/newsletters/newsletters.html**

Thanks,
Sandee Ruth
LCCUG President
president@lccug.com

List of Offices:

President
Vice President
Secretary
Treasurer
Newsletter Editor
Web Page Editor
Statutory Agent
Director of Membership
Director of Advertising
Director of Public Relations

These offices are now held by:
President - Sandee Ruth
Vice President - Lou Koch & Carole Doerr
Secretary - Don Hall
Treasurer - Micky Knickman
Newsletter Editor - Pam Rihel
Web Page Editor - Dennis Smith/Richard Barnett
Statutory Agent - Sandee Ruth
Director of Membership - Kaye Coller
Director of Advertising - Open
Director of Public Relations - Open

These offices are not hard to do and there will be plenty of help if needed to get into the swing of things.

If you can come to the board meetings the 1st Tuesday of every month, then we need you. Most are held at Micky Knickman's house and one of the officers cooks every month. We have fun and we enjoy a good meal.

Sign up today.

Undo Levels; Column Widths

Changing the Maximum Undo Levels

Rob asked if there is a way to change the maximum number of undo levels in Word. The short answer is, no, you can't. The reason is that you don't need to--the only thing that limits the number of undo levels in Word is the amount of resources you have in your computer. This means that the number of undo levels in Word is, for all intents and purposes, unlimited.

There are things, however, that will clear the undo stack. For instance, protecting a document for forms, executing the UndoClear method in a macro, or closing and reopening a document.

Self-Adjusting Column Widths

When setting up a Word document, it is typically most efficient to define your document margins first, then your page layout, then your paragraphs, and finally your individual character formatting. The reason for moving from the "larger picture" toward the smaller when formatting is because changes in the more encompassing elements affect those with a smaller scope.

An example of this is using columns in your document. Columns are a page-layout attribute, and Word allows you to effectively set whatever number of columns you need. These columns are evenly spaced within the document (provided the Equal Column Width check box is selected in the Columns dialog box), or they are set to the specific widths you indicate.

Column widths are always set based on the available horizontal space, between the page margins. What happens if you go back and change the page margins after you set your column widths? The answer depends on the setting of the Equal Column Width check box.

If the check box is selected, the column widths are self-adjusting. Word automatically adjusts the width of all columns to reflect the space available based on the new margin settings. If the check box is not selected, however, then Word only adjusts the width of your left-most and right-most columns. If you have only two columns, this is not a big deal. If you have more than two columns, however, the center columns remain their original width and the outside column widths are changed. If you have more than two columns in your document, you will want to check column widths to make sure they still reflect your needs.

Using the CONCATENATE Worksheet Function

Excel provides a function called CONCATENATE which can be used to combine the contents of several cells, or even to combine cell contents with other text. For instance, let's say you wanted to combine together the contents of cells A3 and B3, separate them by a space, and have the result appear in cell C3. All you need to do is put the following formula in cell C3:

```
=CONCATENATE(A3," ",B3)
```

Primarily, the CONCATENATE function is used for compatibility with other spreadsheet programs. You can just as easily use the ampersand (&) operator to combine text values using a formula. For instance, the following is equivalent to the example of CONCATENATE shown above:

```
=A3 & " " & B3
```

LCCUG Treasurer's Report

10/23	Beginning balance	$ 8,397.65
	membership dues	$ 125.00
	raffle donations	$ 49.00
	Lorain Metroparks Adopt-a-Raptor	$ (25.00)
11/29	**LCCUG Certificate of Deposit**	**$ 5,000.00**
11/29	**General Fund balance**	**$ 3,546.65**

Real Viruses, Worms, Spyware, and More…

Here's a brief look at each of these threats:

Computer viruses are designed to spread from one computer to another quickly. Here's what Webopedia says about computer viruses:

"A program or piece of code that is loaded onto your computer without your knowledge and runs against your wishes. Viruses can also replicate themselves. All computer viruses are manmade. A simple virus that can make a copy of itself over and over again is relatively easy to produce. Even such a simple virus is dangerous because it will quickly use all available memory and bring the system to a halt. An even more dangerous type of virus is one capable of transmitting itself across networks and bypassing security systems."

Some computer viruses don't do anything malicious -- others can wipe out everything on your hard drive.

Worms are self-propagating computer viruses. Webopedia defines a worm as:

"A program or algorithm that replicates itself over a computer network and usually performs malicious actions, such as using up the computer's resources and possibly shutting the system down." Their impact is similar to computer viruses.

Trojan Horses are closely related to computer viruses, but they differ in that they do not attempt to replicate themselves. More specifically, a Trojan Horse performs some undesired -- yet intended -- action while, or in addition to, pretending to do something else. A common example is a fake login program, which collects account information and passwords by asking for this info just like a normal login program does.

Here's what Webopedia says about Trojan horses, including where the term comes from:

"A destructive program that masquerades as a benign application. Unlike viruses, Trojan horses do not replicate themselves but they can be just as destructive. One of the most insidious types of Trojan horse is a program that claims to rid your computer of viruses but instead introduces viruses onto your computer.

"The term comes from a story in Homer's Iliad, in which the Greeks give a giant wooden horse to their foes, the Trojans, ostensibly as a peace offering. But after the Trojans drag the horse inside their city walls, Greek soldiers sneak out of the horse's hollow belly and open the city gates, allowing their compatriots to pour in and capture Troy."

Spyware is software that tracks your actions and/or your Internet use. It can capture what you type on your keyboard, including passwords, and send it to the spyware creator. Here's what Webopedia says about spyware:

"Any software that covertly gathers user information through the user's Internet connection without his or her knowledge, usually for advertising purposes. Spyware applications are typically bundled as a hidden component of freeware or shareware programs that can be downloaded from the Internet; however, it should be noted that the majority of shareware and freeware applications do not come with spyware. Once installed, the spyware monitors user activity on the Internet and transmits that information in the background to someone else. Spyware can also gather information about e-mail addresses and even passwords and credit card numbers.

"Spyware is similar to a Trojan horse in that users unwittingly install the product when they install something else.

"Aside from the questions of ethics and privacy, spyware steals from the user by using the computer's memory resources and also by eating bandwidth as it sends information back to the spyware's home base via the user's Internet connection. Because spyware is using memory and system resources, the applications running in the background can lead to system crashes or general system instability."

Adware is "a form of spyware that collects information about the user in order to display advertisements in the Web browser based on the information it collects from the user's browsing patterns."

Scumware changes how you view websites you visit. It replaces the actual content of sites with ads from scumware advertisers, and generates traffic for the scumware advertisers.

Note: Every single day we hear about viruses causing major PC crashes, PC's being hacked into, Spyware installed without their permission, and even private information stolen.

The inconvenience and cost of repairing this physical damage is considerable, but the psychological effect can be devastating.

Yet it's relatively simple to protect yourself! But if that's the case, why do millions of people never protect them

(Continued from page 8) Real Viruses, Worms...

selves as they should?

It's because installing security and safety precautions APPEARS to be costly, technical and intimidating. So the vast majority of people don't do it -- with devastating consequences!

We found a simple solution: It's called 'The 'PC & Internet Security Kit'.

For the first time, you can bullet proof your PC and personal information without any technical knowledge and without spending an arm and a leg doing it. This is not a free resource, but it's well worth it. **Click here** to read all about it. **[Editor's note: this is an advertisement; there are freeware alternatives available.]**

Our other favorite resources on computer viruses and hoaxes:

√   **Symantec's latest virus threats and security advisories** http://www.symantec.com

√   **McAfee virus info and recent threats** http://us.mcafee.com/virusInfo/

√   **List of the latest computer hoaxes** http://www.f-secure.com/hoaxes/hoax_new.shtml

---

Nothing Lasts Forever   **Smart Computing** In Plain English
You might be tempted to back up all of your important computer files to CD and DVD and figure your data is safe forever. But remember that no storage media is perfect, and that the dyes on optical discs break down over time, meaning your data will likely wind up corrupted at some point. That's why you should make multiple copies of every backup disc you create, and consider storing all of your important data on a large **external hard drive, too.**

Shield Your Cards
Flash cards can withstand a lot of abuse, but if you mistreat a card, it could stop working. Almost all flash cards ship with a tiny plastic storage case. These cases aren't meant to be discarded. Instead, you should store your backup cards in these cases at all times to protect them from the shock of falls and from moisture, too.

One of our members, John A. "Alex" McNair passed away Friday, November 5, 2010.

Alex was born in Jarrow-OnTyne, England, June 17, 1921 and had been a long-time resident of Lorain.

Alex was a World War II veteran of the United States Army, where he fulfilled duty assignments as a Staff Sergeant in the Air Corps. He was a recipient of the European-African-Middle Eastern Service Medal.

Mr. McNair was employed as a machinist for the United States Steel Corporation for 41 years. He was a member of the Episcopal Church of the Redeemer in Lorain, Sheffield Masonic Lodge 628 F & A.M., Polish Fisherman's club and the Society of Air Race Historians. In his free time, he enjoyed fishing, woodworking, and television repair.

Survivors include his sons, Thomas A McNair (Mary) of Elyria and David S. McNair (Tammy) of Dayton, Texas; five grandchildren; three great-grandchildren and a brother, William R. McNair.

He was preceded in death by his wife, Aileen M. McNair (nee Stuller) in 2004 and parents, Andrew and Elizabeth (nee Morris) McNair.

The funeral was held on November 11, 2010 and burial was at ridge Hill Memorial Park, Amherst Township.

Alex will be missed by all who knew him. I know he enjoyed the time he spent at our meetings.

LORAINCOUNTY.COM

Where Local Technology Information Can Be Found 24/7

NEED HELP?—
Here's Who to Contact:

Neil Higgins

440-967-9061 - higgins.neil@gmail.com
Evenings 6 p.m. -10 p.m. + Weekends
Hardware, Linux & Windows Operating Systems,
Tweaking your system

Micky Knickman

440-967-3118 - micky@knickman.com
Evenings 5 p.m. – 8 p.m. + Weekends
General Software Configuration, Hardware Installation,
Basic to Advanced Windows

Lou Koch

440-985-1585 - lkkoch@centurytel.net
Microsoft Office: Excel, Word, PowerPoint, Publisher, Access, &
Outlook, Basic to Advanced Windows

Edie Lewandowski

440-282-4188 - elew@erienet.net
Daytime - midnight
Desktop Publishing, General File Management, Eudora Email,
MSWorks Tools,

Richard Barnett

440-365-9442 - Richard216@aol.com
Evenings & Weekends
General Software Configuration, HardwareInstallation, Basic to
Advanced Windows & Web Page Design

Sandee Ruth

440-984-2692 - sandee29@gmail.com
6 p.m. - 10 p.m. except when at work
Basic Word Processing, Windows, & Web Design
Advanced Internet

Jeff Kasler

440-967-7142 - Jeffk@roadrunner.com
10 a.m. - 7 p.m.
Burning CDs using Record Now

David Kennett

440-327-8624 - w8kfj@yahoo.com
9 a.m. - 8 p.m.
Video Editing & DVD Burning

Cathy Ratcliff

therats1@verizon.net
Though she lives in Coshocton, you can call
740-327-1483 before 8 pm
Paint Shop Pro, other Photo Editing programs,
Microsoft Office programs

Keith Kuhn

440-967-6509 - kthkuhn@yahoo.com
8 a.m. - 11 p.m.
Downloading Music & Burning CDs

Don't forget to check the Members' page for up-to-date information about programs & events:
http://www.lccug.com/members

LCCUG ONGOING CLASSES AND WORKSHOPS
ALL ARE FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Problem Solving Workshop

Date: No Class in December
Time: 5:30 - 8 pm   **Instructor:** Micky Knickman, et al.
Place: Amherst Church of the Nazarene
210 Cooper Foster Park Rd.,44001

Learn how to repair or update your computer by changing hard drives, memory, CD ROMs, etc.
Members are encouraged to bring their computers any-time before 7:30 pm for assistance from Micky, Neil or other knowledgeable members.

Genealogy Class

Date: No Class in December
Time: 3:15 - 5:15 pm
Instructor: Pam Rihel
Place: LCCC Learning Center.
St. Joe's Com. Center, 21st & Broadway

Learn more about finding your ancestors with public records & online websites. How to start & sources to use.

You must register - Phone: 440-277-6076 or
Email: **LadyGeneo@roadrunner.com**

Intermediate Computing

Date: December 14, 2010
Time: 3:00 - 5:00 pm
Instructor: Jean Griffith
Place: LCCC Learning Center.
St. Joe's Com. Center, 21st & Broadway

Bring your questions if you'd like. Jean will start with the basics and move on to intermediate topics if time allows. Learn MS Word, copying & pasting, for-matting text, saving files, basic file management, basic PC maintenance, etc

Register by calling LCCC Learning Center:
440-366-4507

The Lorain County Chapter of OGS
is having it's next meeting on :
December 13th

Meetings are held the 2nd Monday of the month in the North Ridgeville Library on Bainbridge Rd., east off Rt. 83-just south of Rt. 20.

Meetings start at: Social time 6:30; and 7:00 PM for the program. Meetings are free and open to the public.

Come and enjoy some interesting genealogy programs.

December 2010 Classes

Class Type	Location	Registration	December	Time	More Info
Classes / Workshops					
Problem Solving **Micky Knickman**	Amherst Church of the Nazarene 210 Cooper Foster Park	Not Required	**No Class in December**	5:30 to 8:00 pm	Page 10
Genealogy Class Online & Off Pam Rihel	LCCC Learning Center St. Joe's Com. Center 21st & Broadway	Reg. required LadyGeneo @ roadrunner.com	**No Class in December**	3:15-5:15 pm	Page 10
Intermediate Computing Class	LCCC Learning Center St. Joe's Com. Center 21st & Broadway	Jean Griffith Register by calling: 440-366-4507	December 14, 2010	3:00-5:00 pm	Page 10
Is there a class you would like to teach or a class you would be interested in attending, please let one of our officers know. **We want to fill this last row with something new to be taught.**					

The LCCUG Officers would like to thank all our members for their participation throughout this last year.

We wish all of you Happy Holidays and a Happy New Year.

We are planning some very interesting programs for 2011 and we hope that you will continue to come to our meetings and you will also get to ask questions before the meetings, socialize with other members and just enjoy the programs.

Thanks To You All
See you all next year!

Western Digital Breaks The 3TB SATA Barrier

Your PC is brimming with storage-gobbling video and music files, along with applications and other content that eventually leave your hard drive(s) begging for relief. If this is an accurate description of your storage situation, Western Digital has a solution that can ease your capacity woes.

The latest addition to the company's Caviar Green family of SATA (Serial Advanced Technology Attachment) hard drives is a 3TB (terabyte) model ($239; www.westerndigital.com) that has a 750GBper-platter areal density and Advanced Format technology that helps increase media format efficiency. This drive also features WD GreenPower technology, which reduces power consumption, increases reliability thanks to lower operating temperatures, and decreases acoustical operating noise.

Although it might be tempting to drop this drive into your PC and immediately reap the benefits of its massive secondary storage, be aware that 32-bit versions of Windows will recognize a maximum of only 2.19TB of storage per drive, and even the 64-bit versions will need a motherboard that uses a specific type of BIOS (Basic Input/Output System). The good news is that Western Digital is bundling an AHCI (Advanced Host Controller Interface)-compliant host bus adapter with the drive. The adapter will let you use this Caviar Green model as a boot or secondary drive in 64-bit versions of Windows Vista and Windows 7, or as a secondary drive in the 32-bit versions of those operating systems. Earlier Windows versions aren't supported.

Reprinted with permission from Smart Computing. Visit http://www.smartcomputing.com to learn what Smart Computing can do for you and your user group!

Comfort Counts

Shopping for a notebook computer bag? Sure, it's important to find one that will protect your laptop at a reasonable price, but give some thought to usability. Find a bag that opens wide, so you don't have to scratch up your wrists trying to fish things out of a tight, zippered opening. Also, make sure that the carry handle and shoulder strap are padded, breathable, and not prone to slip. In fact, a strap that stretches a little will be the most comfortable as you walk around city streets.

Russ asks:

What is Chromium OS? Is it an operating system that can be used by an average computer user without knowledge of programming, just the average guy who uses Windows?

Russ, as an average (or perhaps below average) guy who uses Windows, what I can tell you is that the answer to this question has been difficult for me to understand. But I'll attempt to explain it anyway. Chromium OS is an open source operating system, that is basically an enhanced web browser, still in the development phase. This will be a cloud based system, meaning most, if not all, work will be performed on the web.

According to Google, "Chromium OS is an open-source project that aims to build an operating system that provides a fast, simple, and more secure computing experience for people who spend most of their time on the web." Chromium OS is comparable to Google's Chromium, which was an open source project that provided the foundation upon which Google's Chrome browser was eventually built. In similar fashion, Google has offered a platform for developers to find the open source code for Chromium OS, with which they (the developers) can build or tweak the elements of an operating system.

The fruit of this labor will likely be used in the development of Chrome OS, a stripped down operating system; a web browser, with no installed programs. All interaction will take place on the internet. Applications will be available, but they'll be web based, rather than installed. Examples of apps currently available include Gmail, YouTube, and Google Docs along with several others
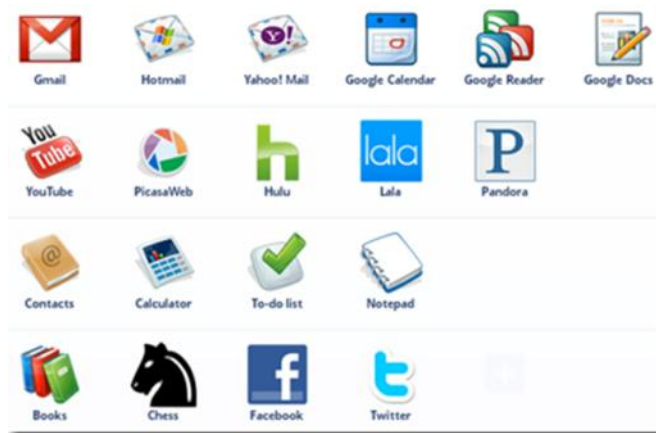
(see below), with more in development.

Initially, this OS will be offered to consumers in netbooks, with plans to make it available for laptops and PCs in the future. However, the Chrome OS will only be installed on hardware approved by Google. The launch was supposed to take place in November, but will more

THE BEST DESKTOP GADGETS FOR WINDOWS 7

Jonathan Wylie

Desktop gadgets first appeared on Windows computers with Vista, but they have been updated and improved for Windows 7. Here are some of the best ones for having fun, staying informed, or for increasing your productivity. All of them are available to download free from the **Windows Live Gadget Gallery.**

1. **Ultimate Explorer** - This multi-functional tool can help you bypass your browser with a quick internet search right from your desktop. You can search Google, Amazon, Yahoo, eBay, YouTube, Wikipedia and more.
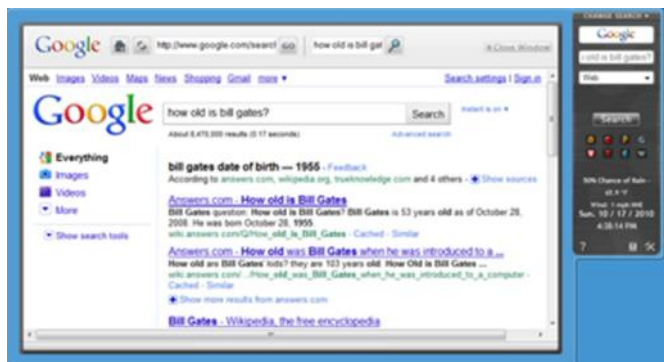
You can choose to have Ultimate Explorer search in your default browser, but I like to have it appear as a gadget flyout window, (as above). Searching the web is the default setting, but you can also search for videos, images, news, blogs and more. If you set the size of Ultimate Explorer large enough, you can even have it display the time, date and weather conditions for your area.

2. **The Magic Folder** - This great little gadget is for everyone who has a messy desktop that is packed full of documents, images, videos and more. With the Magic Folder, any file you drag and drop over it will be instantly moved to one of your home library folders. It reads the file extension of each file and ensures that office documents go to your Documents library, audio files end up in your Music library, image files go to your Pictures library and videos go to the Video library.

If you want more control, you change the folder redirection path to whatever you want, and you can set up rules for how it deals with a specific file type. All in all, this is a great productivity app that could save you a lot of time.

3. **Weather** - The default Windows 7 weather gadget,

'Weather', is actually a pretty stylish and straightforward gadget. It gives a useful three day forecast, includes the low and high temperatures for the day, and has a nice background image for the time of day.

However, AccuWeather.com has a nice weather gadget, and many people also like using WeatherBug as their default forecasting tool. Both of these are generally pretty accurate and look good on your desktop.
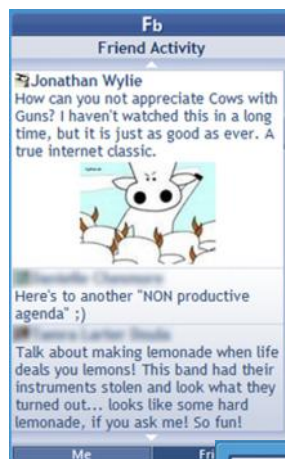
4. **Fb Explorer** - Catch up on all the latest Facebook news with Fb Explorer. It sits right on your desktop and can show updates when and as they happen. You can even update your own status from the desktop to save opening your browser.

Social media fans may also like **Twadget**. This gadget does much the same as Fb Explorer, but with Twitter.
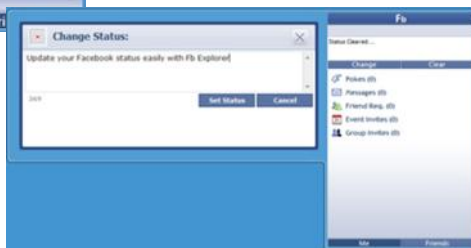
5. **Feed Reader** - Although it will not replace your default RSS reader, Feed Reader is great to have on your desktop, if you want to keep updated with a few of your favorite RSS feeds.

You can add your own feeds manually, or import your feeds from Internet Explorer. There are 3 skins to choose from, up to 8 feeds per page, and a regular refresh for new content. Clicking on the headlines will take

Libraries In Windows 7
Files Of A Feather Flock Together

BY MARTY SEMS

You're pretty good at keeping your computer files organized, aren't you? You store all of your audio files in the My Music folder. Well, except for the playlists you make—those show up in your media player's folder. And, er, except for the family holiday letters your spouse leaves on the Desktop instead of in My Documents. And . . .

OK, 'fess up. Somehow your data kicked over its traces. Instead of being neatly corralled in their proper folders, your video clips, tax returns, and other files are now grazing here, there, and everywhere. This isn't a bad situation *per se*, but it has the potential to be. If you're like us, you've learned the hard way that when your files start to sprawl, it becomes harder to find them and easier to leave them out of backups.

At this point, it might be impractical for you to move all of your personal files to a handful of designated folders. Not only could it take you considerable time to do so, but you might also negatively affect applications and files that expect to find your data in particular places. If you've made music playlists, for example, you'll find that your media player will skip over any songs that you have moved to different folders.

A less obtrusive way to get a handle on your data diaspora is to use Windows 7's Libraries feature. Libraries let you group folders that have something in common, such as photo files, so you can work with all of your pictures in a single window, for example. The neat part is that adding a folder to a library doesn't alter its files' physical locations on your drive(s), so you don't have to worry about breaking dependent items such as music playlists.

Steps Of The Library
Press WIN (the Windows logo key)-E to open Windows Explorer. Along the left side of the panel, you'll see a Libraries category with Documents, Music, Pictures, and Videos in it: These are Win7's premade libraries covering four common types of user data. Of course, you can make your own libraries to suit your needs (more on that later).

Click the Pictures library and the 2 Locations link. (It may say 3 Locations or more.) In the pop-up window, you'll see that by default, the Pictures library contains the My Pictures folder in C:\USERS\<*USERNAME*> and the Public Pictures folder in C:\USERS\PUBLIC.

(Don't confuse Win7's library and folder names with the premade folders in Windows XP [such as My Pictures] and Vista [Pictures].)

And if you add another folder of photos to the library—something else we'll explain below—you'll find it in this pane, too.

It might help you to think of a library as a kind of a club with folders as its members. Said folders can be members of other clubs, too. Another analogy is that a library is akin to a folder containing other folders; a super-folder, if you will. However, a library is different from a folder in that it doesn't "exist" one step up from its folders in the hierarchy of files. Moreover, deleting a library won't erase any of its contents. You'll simply get rid of the virtual super-folder grouping the real folders in one place—or dissolve the "club's" membership.
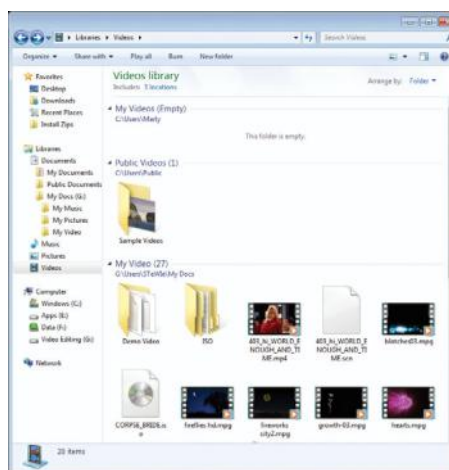
Here's a screen shot of the Videos library on a PC with video files scattered across several folders.

Although a particular folder, such as My Videos, can belong to multiple libraries, it can only reside in one actual folder or directory on the drive, such as C:\USERS\<*USERNAME*>. For example, you could make a library called Work encompassing a folder of spreadsheets in My Documents, a folder of animated presentations in My Videos, a folder of executive photos for an update of the company Web site, and so on. Even though these folders have disparate file types and belong to other libraries (such as Pictures and Documents), they can still be members of your Work library.

Win7 does impose a few restrictions on the folders you can add to a library. For instance, you can include fold-

ers on external hard drives and USB flash drives (if they appear in the Hard Disk Drives section in Computer), but not on optical discs. For details, click Start and Help And Support, and then search for "libraries."

Open Your Own Branch

It's easy to make your own libraries in Win7. Click Libraries in the left column of an Explorer window and then click New Library along the top edge. Type a label for the new library, such as **Finances**, and press ENTER.

When a library is empty, like the one you just made, you can assign folders to it by double-clicking it and selecting Include A Folder. Now, browse to the folder you want, such as a group of tax PDFs. Click it to highlight it and then click Include Folder. You can put up to 50 folders into a library. To add folders to an existing library that already contains one or more folders, right-click the library, choose Properties, and then click Include A Folder. Note that you can add folders to Win7's premade libraries such as Music and Documents, too. In other words, you're not limited to customizing only the libraries you create.

The Properties window also lets you adjust a library's Arrange By options in Windows Explorer. For example, if you set the Optimize This Library For drop-down menu to Videos, the Arrange By menu will include file sorting filters such as Length, Year, and Type.

The Library's Mail Slot

We're all in favor of anything that promotes drag-and-drop ease. Win7 makes it a little easier to put a new song into your music collection, for example, because it lets you drag and drop the file onto the name of the library itself, such as Music. The song will automatically move into the folder in the Music library designated as its default save location.
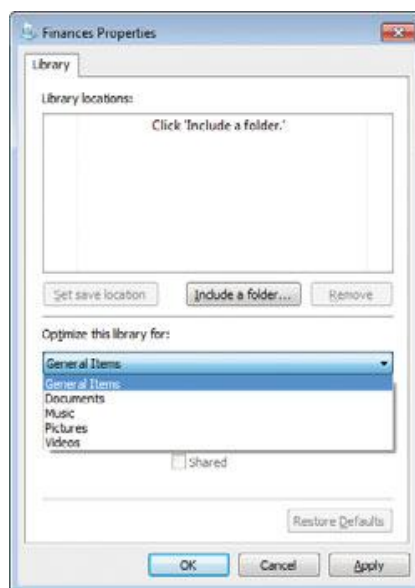
You can change a library's default save location so that when you move a file to a library, and not specifically into one of the folders it comprises, the file will land in the folder that's appropriate for most of the data of that type. Right-click a library's name and choose Properties. Next, click the new destination folder under Library Locations. Click Set Save Location, Apply, and OK.

One reason to change the default save locations of your media file libraries is to keep your C: partition from getting full. For instance, lately some users have been installing Windows on an SSD (solidstate drive) to make their PCs feel more responsive and boot more quickly. However, because SSDs are relatively expensive compared to hard drives, many users use a small 30 to 40GB SSD as a boot drive (C:) in conjunction with a separate hard drive for mass storage (such as E:).

Even though you don't need to dig into a library to find a home for a file in a particular folder, you still can if you need to. For instance, say you've downloaded a ringtone for your cell phone. It may belong in your Music library, technically, but you don't necessarily want it in the same folder as your "real" songs. Instead of saving it to your Music library, which would drop the file in the library's default save location with your music collection, dig down into the Music library's folders along the left side of the window to find or create a separate folder that's more appropriate. That way, the next time you play a random mix of your music, you won't hear partial snippets of tunes, podcasts, system sounds, and so on.
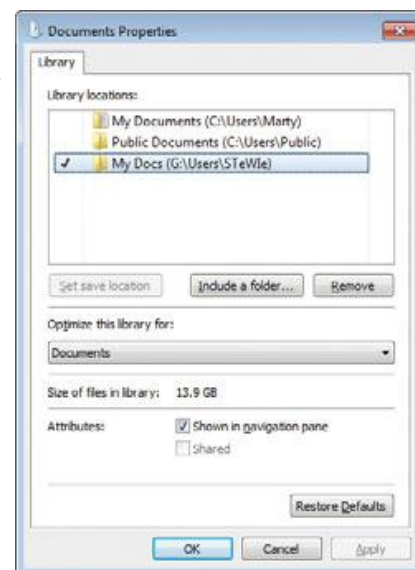
More Library Science

For information on sharing libraries with Windows Media Center or other computers on your network, check out Win7's Help And Support.

You can change a library's file Arrange By options with the Optimize This Library For drop-down menu.

The check mark denotes the folder that's the Default save location for files you drag-and-drop into a library.

you to the full story online.

6. Slide Show - Slide Show is a default Windows 7 gadget so you shouldn't need to download it from the online gallery. This handy app allows you to select a folder of images from your computer that you would like to display as a slideshow.

You can set the time limit for each picture, and adjust the type of transition you would like to see between slides. Think of it like a mini-screensaver for your desktop.

7. **Sudoku** - With this addictive number game on your desktop, you may not want to get online until you finish.

Start with a simple puzzle or go straight for the expert ones by choosing the level you want, and check for errors as you go with the 'check' button. If you get stuck, click on a square and then click hint to reveal the number you need. It is good, clean fun, and something you can come back to time and time again.
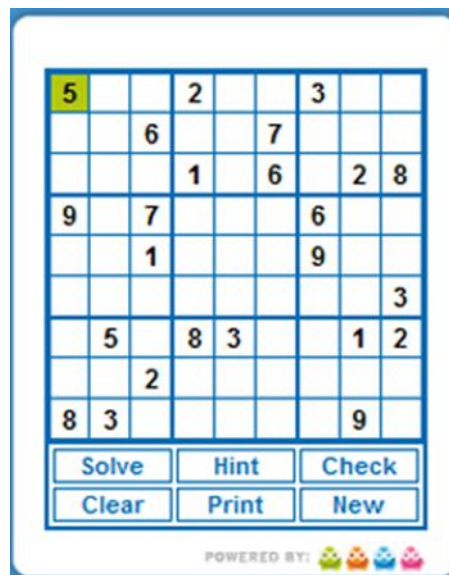
Reprinted with permission from WorldStart. Visit http:// www.worldstart.com and subscribe to their informative newsletters.

Best Middle School Trick Football Play Ever (video): **http://www.youtube.com/v/ kp0eiJpo5-0**

Monitor Masterpiece

~ Erin

Do you ever have trouble getting your computer monitor to sit just like you want it? I mean, sometimes it can tilt too much or too little and if it's not in the perfect position, the time you spend on your computer can turn into a real nightmare. So, I'm here to save the day with a few tips that will help you create the perfect monitor viewing area for yourself. Let's get started!

First of all, you should place your monitor right in front of you at an arm's length distance away. Feel free to move it closer or further away if you need to though. An arm's length is just an estimate. You also need to pay attention to your monitor's height. It should be positioned in a way that your head is still balanced comfortably with your shoulders. You shouldn't have to move your neck forward or backward at all. A good judge to go by is when the top line of text on a Web site is just below your eye height. If your monitor is like that, you should be good to go....

Reprinted with permission from WorldStart. Visit http:// www.worldstart.com and subscribe to their informative newsletters.

Moving Quickly Through a Document with Your Keyboard

Ramachandran Kumaraswami

A lot of us, including myself, enjoy using our keyboards to move the mouse cursor from sentence to sentence in an e-mail or from paragraph to paragraph in a different document. Either way, that darn cursor just moves way too slow sometimes, doesn't it? Well, here's a fun tip for you on how you can speed things up a little bit. Here we go!

When you are typing on your computer, you usually see a black flashing line (your cursor) that shows you where you are in your document. The flashing line is also called a text cursor or an insertion point.

In order to position the cursor exactly where you want it, it is often easier to use the arrow keys on your keyboard, rather than the mouse.

You can also make the cursor move faster. If you hold an arrow key down (try the left arrow key or the right arrow key first), the cursor will keep moving quickly.

Now, if you hold the **Ctrl** key down on your keyboard and then hit the **right arrow key** or the **left arrow key**, the cursor will jump to the next word (or sentence, etc.) instead of the next letter. Each time you hit the arrow key once, with the Ctrl key held down, it will jump to the next space.

Moves between words

If you hold the **Ctrl** key down and then hold down the **right arrow key** or the **left Arrow key**, the cursor will jump quickly from word to word. This is even faster than holding an arrow key down without the Ctrl key.

If you're looking to move even faster through a document, holding the **Ctrl** key while hitting the **up and down arrow keys**, will jump your cursor between paragraphs.

Moves between paragraphs

Give them a try and add some speed to your life!

Reprinted with permission from WorldStart. Visit ***http://www.worldstart.com*** *and subscribe to their informative newsletters.*

Google Place Search

Google added another item to its search arsenal with Place Search, which provides local search results in a slightly new way-based around places. Primarily, the tweak has to do with how Google displays those search results on the page. Now Google includes those results in the same format as other search results, but now a red pin indicates a destination is a local search result. You can click the Place Page link to see more details about each result.

Further, there is a Places entry on the left side of the Google screen where the search categories such as Images, Video, and News are listed, enabling you to drill down your search results.
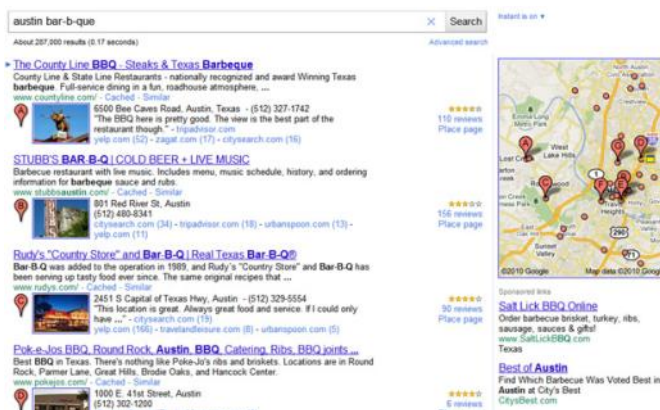
With Google Place Search, local establishments are more prominently displayed in search results with more data.

★★★★★★

likely happen in early 2011.

Aside from the obvious profit motive, Google may have pursued Chromium OS due to real or perceived security weaknesses in Windows operating systems. It's rumored that Google employees are required to use either Mac or Linux, and must get special clearance to use Windows.

As someone with a website, who works for an internet based company, and who does most of his correspondence and work electronically, I should embrace a browser based operating system. However, I like the idea of being able to access applications and files with or without a web connection. And, while I haven't used web based applications enough to make a valid comparison, it's difficult to believe that the extensive editing capabilities of installed software (Photoshop, MS Office, etc.), can be matched by existing web based software.

For more on Chrome OS, Google has provided several informational videos. Links to two of them can be found below.

What is Google Chrome OS?
Google Chrome OS UI Concept Video

Russ, thanks for the question. I hoped this helped.
~Kevin

Reprinted with permission from WorldStart. Visit **http://www.worldstart.com** *and subscribe to their informative newsletters.*

Acorn Music Free Holiday Sampler (5 songs):
http://www.amazon.com/Acorn-Music-Free-Holiday-Sampler/dp/B004D0R4HK

Sugo Music Free Holiday Sampler (5 songs):
http://www.amazon.com/Sugo-Music-Free-Holiday-Sampler/dp/B004812NDY

Free VeggieTales Christmas album (16 songs for the kids):
http://www.amazon.com/The-Incredible-Singing-Christmas-Tree/dp/B001232ODA

News From The Help Desk

Q. **When I try to save a file from Gmail to My Documents, I get an error message saying I need to activate cookies. What does this mean, and how I do activate cookies?**

A. Cookies are very small files that can be used to store a variety of information. For instance, Gmail cookies may contain session information that Gmail can use to automatically log you in the next time you visit from the same PC. Although cookies generally make life online easier, they can also be used, mainly by online marketers, to track your Internet habits.

If you decide you want to enable cookies, you'll need to do so in whatever browser you're using. In Internet Explorer, cookies are controlled by Internet Explorer's Privacy Settings. Click Tools, open Internet Options, and click the Privacy tab. If you don't want to adjust all your Privacy settings, click Advanced and place a check next to Override Automatic Cookie Handling. Select Accept under First Party Cookies. You may wish to select Block under Third Party Cookies (this is a good way to prevent online marketers from monitoring you too closely). Finally, you can place a check next to Always Allow Session Cookies if you want to allow cookies that automatically log you in to sites.

In Firefox, Click Options in the Tools menu and click Privacy. In the drop-down menu under History, select Use Custom Settings For History. Make sure there's a check next to Accept Cookies From Sites. If you want, you can remove the check next to Accept Third-Party Cookies. Finally, in Google Chrome, click the wrench icon and select Options. Click the Under The Hood Tab and then click the Content Settings button. Make sure to select Allow Local Data To Be Set. Again, you can select Block All Third-Party Cookies Without Exception to block third party cookies.
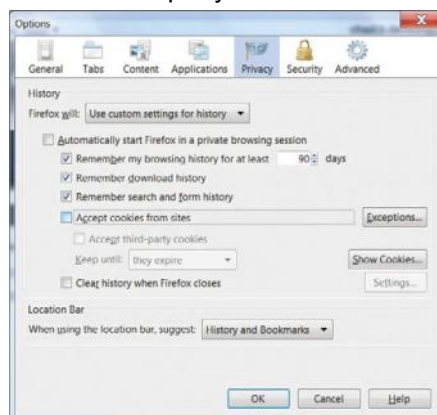
To enable cookies in Firefox, click Privacy in the Options menu. In the drop-down menu at the top of the screen, select Use Custom Settings For History and make sure there's a check next to Accept Cookies From Sites.

Reprinted with permission from Smart Computing. Visit http://www.smartcomputing.com to learn what Smart Computing can do for you and your user group!

Mr. Modem

Smart Computing *In Plain English*

Best Of The Web 2010

By Richard Sherman

It's that magical time of year when sleigh bells are ringing, carolers are singing, reindeer are clattering—my gosh, how does anybody get any sleep around here? Sleep deprivation notwithstanding, it's time once again for my annual "Best Of The Web" extravaganza. Each year, I review and profile hundreds of Web sites—and yes, it is a real job, but thanks for asking. From this eclectic collection, I have selected a column's worth of this year's most interesting, helpful, noteworthy, or just plain bizarre Web sites. In keeping with the spirit of the holidays, I herewith present them as my humble gift to you. (Sorry, no returns.)

Happy News (www.happynews.com).
Between network and cable news, talk radio, newspapers, online news sources, and 24/7 in-your-face, late-breaking bulletins, many people feel under siege. When the meds just aren't cutting it, scroll on over to one of the happiest places on the Web. Spend a few minutes here each day to lift your spirits and maybe even gain a sliver of inspiration or hope for the future. Okay, maybe that's stretching it, but it's still a warm and fuzzy place to park your mouse.

Answers.com (www.answers.com). A free reference guide that provides fast answers to specific questions covering millions of topics.

Book of Odds (www.bookofodds.com). Intriguing data ranging from the odds of becoming a YouTube celebrity, to the odds that you'll wind up bitter, alone, and sitting around in a bathrobe all day writing magazine columns. (Hey, wait a minute!)

ElderTreks (www.eldertreks.com). Exotic adventures to off-the-beaten-path destinations created exclusively for age 50+ travelers. Select your tour by price and activity level, ranging from "Gentle" to "You-want-me-to-climb-what?"

Medical Assistance (www.medhelp.org). More than 10 million people each month find answers to their medical questions at this site, created to connect people with leading medical experts. Perhaps they are unaware of the healing powers of chicken soup.

Mind Games (playwithyourmind.com). More than 100 word games, card games, typing games, memory games, math games, and logic puzzles, all designed to challenge your mind. May cause cerebral cramping.

Optical Illusions (www.michaelbach.de/ot). Presents and analyzes optical illusions from a scientific perspec-

tive, as opposed to my less sophisticated "Lookie, lookie! Ain't that something?" approach.

Radio Lovers (www.radiolovers.com). Close your eyes and transport yourself back to a kinder, gentler era when radio was king. Here you can listen to hundreds of wonderful old radio broadcasts featuring Groucho Marx, Blondie, Bob Hope, and many, many more.

Time-Warp (www.time-warp.org). Take a leisurely scroll through the years and learn about the technology that evolved during each era. Peruse pictures of then-new technologies such as reel-to-reel tape recorders, record players, manual typewriters, desktop calculators, and color television. (Sigh.)

TryPhone (tinyurl.com/287slgc). Use these interactive online virtual handsets to test-drive mobile devices, cell phones, applications, content, and services or watch demonstrations. Try it, then possibly buy it.

Wi-Fi Finder (tinyurl.com/cqsek5). If you're in dire need of a wireless hotspot, here you will find more than 338,000 of them, in 144 countries. Click the map and drill down to a location or search by address, location type, proximity, or free or paid access. Bookmark this one if you're frequently on the move or on the lam.

Wimp (wimp.com). The best G-rated, family-oriented videos on the Web. The site is updated each day with five new videos, so there is always something new to view, and you don't have to worry about your kids viewing something that would make you swoon, gasp, or collapse in a heap.

You Were How Old When? (tinyurl.com/1z4v). Enter your birth date to see how old you were when a variety of historical events occurred and how much older or younger you are than other individuals. I can't decide if this is entertaining and informative or simply depressing.

On behalf of Mrs. Modem, Willy, Nilly, Bertie, and Lilly, we wish you a happy holiday season, and I look forward to meeting you back here next month, as we careen headlong into 2011!

Reprinted with permission from Smart Computing. Visit http://www.smartcomputing.com to learn what Smart Computing can do for you and your user group!

Humorous videos:

Dennis Swanberg: Bengy and the Zipper
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qWH-VToohro

Quantitative Easing Explained - What the Federal Reserve is up to, and how we got here. Note, this is humor, and there is some strong language:
http://www.flixxy.com/quantitative-easing-explained.htm

Insert Symbols In Word

There are hundreds of symbols, icons, and foreign letters that are not present on a standard QWERTY keyboard but still find daily use in documents across America. The symbols available in Word include copyright and trademark icons, umlauts, accents, monetary symbols from all over the world, and many more. To insert a symbol, click Insert, then Symbol. Choose a symbol from the list or click More Symbols. When the dialog box appears, scroll through to find the symbol you need, click it, and click Insert. Click Close to get rid of the dialog box.

light guide

A piece of equipment that transmits light from one point to another. Fiber-optic cables are light guides.

TasteStopping

There are any number of great recipe sites out there with immaculate looking dishes that literally make your mouth water. But for all the great recipes that get included, there are many that do not, and that is the idea behind TasteStopping (**tastestopping.com**). They feature dishes that have been rejected by other food photography sites. Here, the visitors to the site decide which are worthy and which are not. If you like, leave a comment to let those who submitted the recipes know what you think. **http://tastestopping.com**

Word Shortcuts

Microsoft Word is perfectly navigable with a mouse and a few clicks on the Ribbon, but it also has loads of keyboard shortcuts that you can take advantage of while you're typing away. Once learned, these can make your work significantly more efficient. Here are a few favorites:
CTRL-C copies a highlighted section of text.
CTRL-P pastes a copied section of text.
CTRL-X cuts any highlighted text; generally, the next step would be to paste the cut section somewhere else.
CTRL-D brings up the Font window; from here you can modify font, text size, character spacing, and styles.
END moves the cursor to the end of a line.
CTRL-K brings up the Hyperlink window.
SHIFT-F7 brings up the Thesaurus window.
CTRL-S saves the open document.

Netbook Processors & Storage

It's tempting to think of netbooks as compact, inexpensive notebooks, but they're not as capable and versatile. Think of them primarily as portable Internet browsing devices that can also run Web-based applications and basic on-system applications. Netbooks also employ power-saving, single-core processors in an effort to keep prices down and extend battery life. Many netbooks also feature memory card readers.
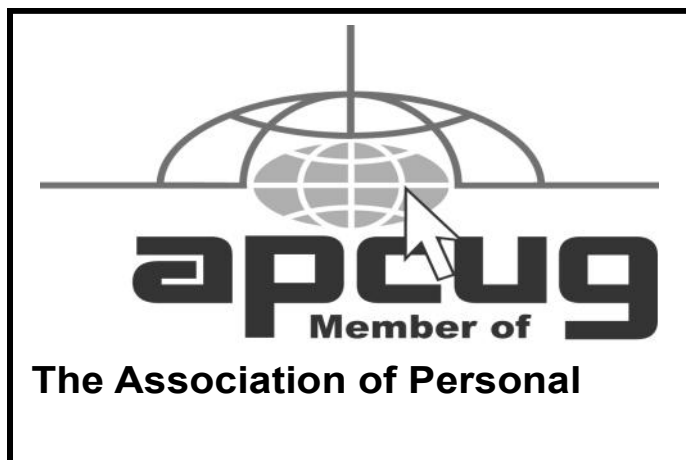
Save Battery Life

If you are looking for more ways to extend the life of your laptop battery, there's one you might not have thought of yet. If you defragment your notebook's hard drive regularly, your hard drive will demand less power since it's not working as hard, which in turn will save battery life.

Protect Your Screen

Your laptop screen is vulnerable to scratches and marks even when it's closed. To best protect your screen, consider placing a piece of paper, rubber mat, cloth, or similar material between the keyboard and screen before closing your laptop. Many laptops come with a little foam insert from the factory. This also makes a fine protector.

Reprinted with permission from Smart Computing. Visit http://www.smartcomputing.com to learn what Smart Computing can do for you and your user group!

The Association of Personal