

# PACC TALK

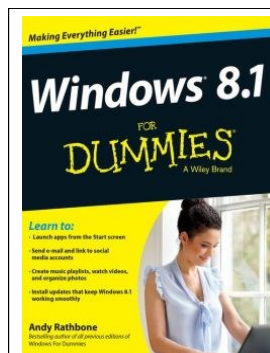
Official Newsletter of the Pittsburgh Area Computer Club

May 17, 2015

## MEETING SCHEDULE

Sunday, May 17, 2015

- 11:00 -11:25 am Sign In, Pay Dues, Greet visitors, Purchase 50/50  
ROOM # 311 tickets (Optional), Setup Computers,  
Connect to Internet , Prep for Meetings
- 11:00 - 11:25 pm PACC BOD Meeting  
ROOM # 301
- 11:35 - 12:00 pm Windows New Users
- 12:00 - 12:30 pm General Meeting, Raffle.  
ROOM # 301
- 12:35 - 2:30pm PortableApps (pg. 1)  
ROOM # 301 VirtualBox, LinuxMint 17.1 (pg. 2)
- 2:35 - 3:30 pm More programs and utilities .....  
ROOM # 301
- 2:05 - 3:30 pm Hardware SIG  
ROOM # 311 Users Helping Users - guests included
- 1:00 - 3:30 pm Linux SIG, Members Helping Members,  
ROOM # 311 Computer troubleshooting, Info Exchange
- 3:30 - 4:00 pm Pack Up Equipment, Doors Close



\*\*\* **RAFFLE** \*\*\*

The bestselling book on Windows, now updated for the new 8.1 features. Microsoft has fine-tuned Windows 8 with some important new features, and veteran author Andy Rathbone explains every one in this all-new edition of a long-time bestseller. Whether you're using Windows for the first time, upgrading from an older version, or just moving from Windows 8 to 8.1, here's what you need to know. Learn about the dual interfaces, the new Start button, how to customize the interface and boot operations, and more...!

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## WINDOWS SIG

### PortableApps

"PortableApps.com is the world's most popular portable software solution allowing you to take your favorite Windows software with you. It works on any cloud drive folder (Dropbox, Google Drive, OneDrive, etc), on any portable storage device (USB flash drive, memory card, portable hard drive, etc), or from your local hard drive. With millions of users all over the world and a full collection of open source software (as well as freeware and commercial software), PortableApps is the most complete solution for life on the go." .....



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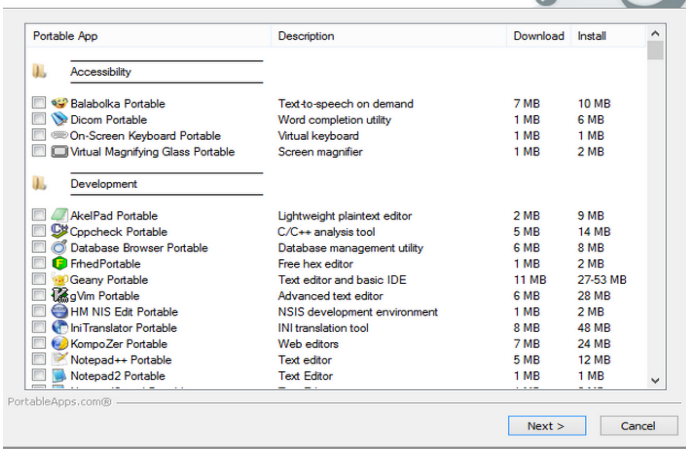
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“PortableApps.com lets you carry all your favorite apps on a portable device or cloud drive and use them on any PC. Your browser with your bookmarks and extensions, your office suite, your photo editor, your music collection, your games, your development tools and more. Everything you need for work and play with you on every PC you use. Work, home, school, visiting family and friends, even while traveling. And everything stays on your drive, too. Now, every PC becomes your PC.”

#### Download New Portable Apps

Select the portable apps you would like to install.



PortableApps.com\_Platform\_Setup\_12.0.5.paf, only 3,675 KB.  
Download it from: <http://portableapps.com/>

*the end of the story*

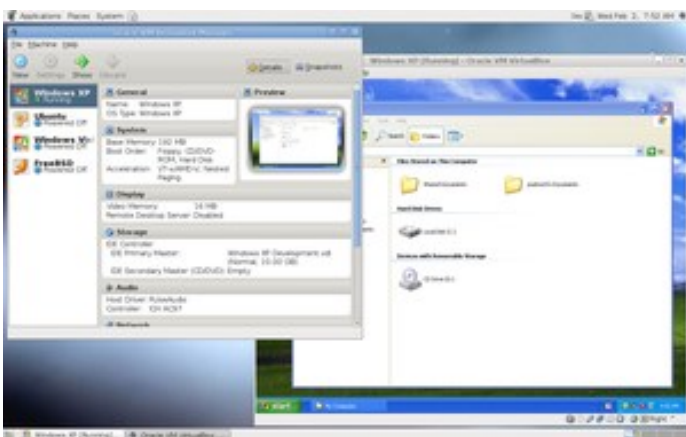
#### VirtualBox

“VirtualBox is a general-purpose full virtualizer for x86 hardware, targeted at server, desktop and embedded use. ....For a thorough introduction to virtualization and VirtualBox, please refer to the online version of the VirtualBox User Manual's first chapter.”

“**Memory.** Depending on what guest operating systems you want to run, you will need at least 512 MB of RAM (but probably more, and the more the better). Basically, you will need whatever your host operating system needs to run comfortably, plus the amount that the guest operating system needs. So, if you want to run Windows XP on Windows XP, you probably won't enjoy the experience much with less than 1 GB of RAM. If you want to try out Windows Vista in a guest, it will refuse to install if it is given less than 512 MB RAM, so you'll need that for the guest alone, plus the memory your operating system normally needs.”

Hard disk space. While VirtualBox itself is very lean (a typical installation will only need about 30 MB of hard disk space), the virtual machines will require fairly huge files on disk to represent their own hard disk storage. So, to install Windows XP, for example, you will need a file that will easily grow to several GB in size.” Download from here:

<https://www.virtualbox.org/wiki/Downloads> ...You will need to decide what you'll want to use. Each download varies in size!



It is only 1.4 GB download from here:

<http://linuxfreedom.com/linuxmint/linuxmint.com//stable/17.1/linuxmint-17.1-cinnamon-32bit.iso>

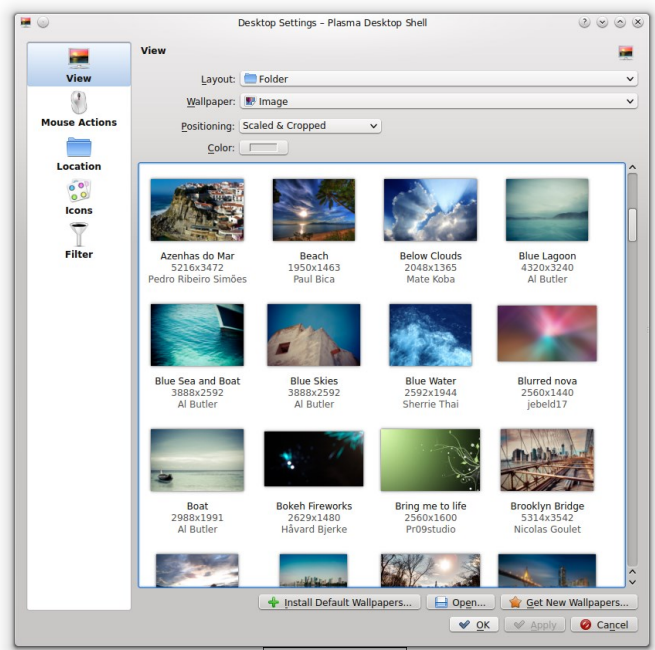


“Linux Mint 17.1 is a long term support release which will be supported until 2019. It comes with updated software and brings refinements and many new features to make your desktop experience more comfortable to use. ....

“Cinnamon 2.4...Smoother Experience....

A lot of care went into attention to details and Cinnamon 2.4 received many little improvements to make your experience smoother and more enjoyable than before.” ....Responsiveness and memory usage...CJS was rebased on a newer version of GJS in an effort to reduce memory usage and provide faster execution times.”.... “All Cinnamon components were reviewed and their source code was checked with static analysis tools. Although most of them were small, about 30 memory leaks were fixed.”

“Icons used in Cinnamon Settings were added to the Mint-X icon theme. This increased responsiveness (This is specific to Linux Mint so we encourage all artists and distributions to do the same).”...



*the end of the story*

**The AMD A10-7800 CPU**  
**By Daniel Woodard, Member,**  
**Dayton Microcomputer Association, OH**  
**November 2014 issue, The Databus**  
**www.dma1.org**  
**dgw (at) dma1.org**

Is your computer bogging down, perhaps not powerful enough to handle daily tasks or games? You've surely heard the old adage: "Take two aspirins and call me in the morning." In the same vein, folks often would upgrade both a video card and the processor to try to speed up their PC. Recently, processors began arriving that combined both a traditional CPU and video card (GPU) into one unit. The recently released AMD A10-7800 is one of these, called an APU, or accelerated processing unit.

Although my computer had a fairly competent processor (Phenom II x4), the motherboard's onboard graphics were very weak, to the point where I was seeing huge amounts of lag when I or my kids were playing some basic browser games. I'm one of those folks who like simplicity, so I've enjoyed watching as LAN cards, sound cards and even video cards have been integrated onto the motherboard. This was fine at first, but eventually I found myself wanting to upgrade the video capabilities, and I'd rather be able to do this without having to pull the motherboard or add a video card. I've had video cards in the past, but prefer the fanless variety since they don't add background noise, and there's no fan that can go bad. Silent video cards with huge heat sinks are more of a niche market today, so prices for better performers have climbed up between \$75 and \$100.

The AMD A10 range of processors offered exactly what I wanted, using the FM2+ socket. (first released earlier this year) The A10-7800 has what is probably the best built in graphics on a very competent but energy efficient processor. Since the graphics are built into the processor, there is no additional heat sink or fan required — it just uses the same heat sink fan that every CPU has anyway. Another advantage is that if I eventually decide to upgrade in a year or two, I can simply and quickly upgrade both the CPU and video elements of my system just by pulling the CPU and inserting a new one — no muss, no fuss.

My prior CPU was the Phenom II X4, running at 2.8 GHz. It drew 95 watts and put out quite a bit of heat. The first thing I noticed about the new A10 CPU was that the heat sink was about half the size of that required for the old Phenom II. I hadn't expected it to be much smaller, considering that now there was also essentially a video card crammed in there as well!

AMD's press release mentions that the processor supports UltraHD (4K) monitor resolutions. The A10-7800 (formerly known as Kaveri) also is touted as having 12 compute cores — 4 CPU and 8 GPU. It runs at a base clock frequency of 3.5 GHz, activating a turbo frequency of 3.9 GHz if an application is demanding. It has 512 video shader cores and a listed 65 watts of drawn power. Also incorporated is AMD TrueAudio, a built in DSP processor that provides dedicated positional sound effects calculation (including echo, etc.) for games. At the time of this writing, the processor is available for around \$140.

As I had mentioned, my main reason for wanting an upgrade was extreme slowdown/lag when playing browser games. I had also noticed an occasional lockup once or twice a month, and decided it was time to install new components. I used Browsermark and PCMark 8 to compare my system before and after the upgrade. Originally I had the AMD Phenom II x4 925 cpu and onboard Radeon HD 4250 video. Phenom II x4 925 (4 core, 2.8 GHz, 95 watt) A10-7800 (4 core, 3.9 GHz, 65 watt)

Winrar 156 Megabyte compress 109 seconds 114 seconds

Hyper Pi 8m calc., 22 iterations 5 min. 26 seconds 4 min. 26 seconds  
142 Watts full load, 83 W at rest 115 Watts full load, 60 W at rest  
# of transistors: 758 million # of transistors: 2.41 billion  
PCMark 8 casual Gaming 7.8 fps 28 fps  
Browsermark Score 1,888 3,758  
(full load vs. at rest tested using Handbrake, h.264/mpeg4 video, doesn't include monitor)

I performed a variety of benchmarks, such as using Winrar to try to compress a 156 Megabyte video file. This may not have been the best choice of file, since they are already highly compressed, but the resulting times were very close, even though the newer cpu clearly uses a lot less power to do the same job. Hyper Pi, which calculates Pi using as many cores as the cpu possesses, showed a marked improvement over the old Phenom II.

If you'll refer to the chart above, you can see that the A10-7800 has roughly three times as many switches/transistors as the Phenom II 925 did. To put that in perspective, my first computer, a TI 99/4a from about 1982, had a cpu with 8,000 transistors, while my first IBM clone in around 1990 had 275,000. Put another way, let's say that each switch represents a person. In that case, my first PC had close to the equivalent of my home town's population toiling away in there, while today it is roughly the equivalent to the population of Asia. Clearly, it won't be too long before there are more switches in my computer's processor than there are people alive.

I was also able to borrow a "Kill A Watt" energy testing outlet device from my Dad to get some interesting readings. For example, now I know that my monitor uses up about 27 watts, with the PC using another 60W when the system is not doing much of anything at the desktop. Without the monitor, the new A10 based system uses 115 watts when doing mpeg4/h.264 video file encoding, vs 142 watts on the old Phenom II system. With the side of the case cover off, I definitely could hear the APU fan become a bit noisier during the video encoding, (when the processor kicked into 3.9 GHz turbo mode) but it wasn't noticeable at all with the case closed. Considering the performance per Watt used, this would be a great choice for a power limited system — if you want to upgrade capabilities without having to upgrade a system's power supply, for example.

Browsermark showed roughly a doubling of ability, while PCMark 8 showed nearly a quadrupling of casual gaming frames per second. Ultimately, I got what I wanted out of the upgrade — browser games are playable again, with no lag for detailed animations in games and such. The system now also has the capability of playing various games with 3D effects, such as mrst and third person shooters — something I definitely could not have done on my old system.

It wouldn't be fair to finish this review without at least trying a few games. The A10-7800 was able to handle a game called King's Bounty that needed a video card upgrade to play about three years ago, due to numerous rendered battle animations. For the past decade, many of the first and third person shooters and other 3D games have used the Unreal Engine. (UE) I downloaded game demos using the UE2, which was used to make many games from about 2003 to 2008, and the system worked flawlessly. I tried another game that was made with UE3, which was used from about 2009 to present, and again, it did a decent job, but not at the highest resolutions.

The next version of the Unreal Engine is UE4, which is currently being used by developers to make games that will come out starting in 2015, and probably for the next 5 years or so. Using a recently released demo of UE4, I was only able to get frame rates of about nine

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*(Continued from page 3)*

to fourteen frames per second, which is not playable. However, it is still orders of magnitude above what I would have gotten with any motherboard's onboard graphics, and probably about 15% better than a stand-alone R7 240 video card.

To be fair, the UE4 development system is meant to push even high end video cards at this point — cards that probably cost more by themselves than this processor does. It makes sense for them to do this, because it usually takes at least a couple of years to develop the games. Also, today's \$350 Radeon R9 or Geforce GTX video cards will be equivalent to a middle of the road \$120 card 3 or so years from now.

APU's such as the A10-7800 are very unlikely to ever interest either of these two groups: overclockers or video card enthusiasts. AMD wasn't going after either of these markets, so it shouldn't be a surprise. What AMD wanted to do was to offer a relatively inexpensive option for people who like to have what you might consider some mid-range graphics built into the processor. Intel has also started doing this, with Intel graphics built in to a number of their processors now. At least for present, AMD definitely has the upper hand as far as video game framerate on these, however. Looking over numerous online benchmarks, I found that the Intel processors could crunch numbers a bit faster, but that the AMD APU's often had double the game framerates. I guess if you spend most of your time compressing files or doing intensive calculations, Intel might be a better choice. However, if anyone in your house plays games, the AMD APU would probably be a better investment.

In a nutshell: I give the A10-7800 a 9.5 out of 10 for energy efficiency and for being able to cram this much video processing ability into an APU. It would probably play 95% of the games out there currently, and you could easily spend \$60 to \$70 on a stand-alone video card that would not outperform this. That said, this is probably a better choice for those who occasionally try first person shooters, considering that it is unlikely to perform well in graphics heavy titles coming out in 2015 and later. For those who leave their PC's on all the time, the savings on an electric bill alone would likely pay for the cost of the A10-7800 in one or two years. This is especially true if your current system has older (released 2010 or before) stand-alone video cards or processors that draw 90W or more.

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*the end of the story*

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## **Tech Support Scam**

### **- Received a Tech Support call lately? -**

**By Phil Sorrentino, Member of The Computer Club, Florida**

**October 2014**

**<http://scccomputerclub.org>**

**[Philsorr.wordpress.com](http://Philsorr.wordpress.com)**

**[philsorr \(at\) yahoo.com](mailto:philsorr(at)yahoo.com)**

This is a very nasty, and possibly costly, scam. It preys on people's concern that their computer might be running slow or might be infected with a virus or some other type of malware. It typically starts with a call from, ostensibly, "Microsoft or Windows or Dell or some other, known Computer Manufacturer's Tech Support" organization. And it can end with the computer owner paying for basically nothing, and giving the scammer his credit card information.

Let's make the point here: Microsoft says "You will never receive a legitimate call from Microsoft or our partners to charge you for computer fixes." So, never respond to a call of this nature; just hang up.

There seem to be many variations on how the scam can get started.

Sometimes you will get a call from the "Microsoft or Dell Tech Support Desk" saying that they have noticed that there is a virus, or errors, on your computer. Sometimes it is started with a pop-up window on your screen while you are browsing the internet. The window (in a variety of different wordings) indicates that you have been infected by a virus and you should call a particular number to remove the virus. Calling that number puts you in contact with the scammer's bogus "Tech Support Desk". Once you are on the phone with the "Tech Support" technician, the scam begins.

This scam is very insidious because the victim may never even realize that he has been scammed. There are many variations on the details of the scammer's interaction with the computer owner once the call has been made; but basically the steps are: the scammer demonstrates, to the computer user, that there is a virus on the computer; the scammer offers to remove the virus for a fee (\$199 to up to \$549, which may be negotiable); the computer user accepts the offer to remove the virus and pays for it with a credit card; the scammer charges the credit card for the agreed upon fee; the scammer "fixes" the computer; the scammer demonstrates that the computer now has no viruses; the computer user thanks the "Tech Support technician" for his help.

The scammer uses a variety of ways to show you that there is a problem. One such ploy is; the scammer asks you to open the computer's Windows Event Log Viewer to show that there is problem. The scammer attempts to win your confidence by showing you that your system has "Errors". When you open the Windows Event Log Viewer, you see errors which lends credence to the scammer's statement that you have a virus. (The scammer relies on the fact that whenever you open the Windows Event Log, you will see some type of error or warning listed, which is quite normal.) Another way the scammer shows you that there is a problem is to have you view files that look like problems, but are really just views of a file that are not typically seen by the average user, but are quite normal. Still another technique is to have you run the Configuration Utility. You see "stopped" next to some services or programs and the scammer states that "the fact that those programs or services are stopped indicates that there has been some damage to the computer". (In truth, it is normal to have some programs or services that are stopped, which may not be obvious to the average computer user.)

So, how can we tell if a scam attempt is in progress? Here are some tip-offs to help you recognize a scam attempt. The first tip-off is that they, the scammer, called you. Note well that, Microsoft, Dell, or any other major company's tech support organization is not very likely to use their resources to get in touch with users to fix their computers. (The scammer may tell you that they are doing this as a Public Service; don't buy into it.) If a Tech Support issue arises with a computer, it is incumbent on the user to contact the appropriate Tech Support organization. The user should make the contact with a known phone number!

A very strong indicator that a scam attempt is in progress is that the "Tech Support technician" will ask you to go to a Website and Install a Tool so that they can Remotely Connect to your computer in order to "fix" the problem. This can be a very good, legitimate, way of having a legitimate Tech Support technician fix your problem, if you truly have a problem, and if you called Tech Support. (There are a few free remote control software tools available just for this purpose, such as TeamViewer and GoToMyPC.) However, if they called you and you then give the scammer control over your computer, the scammer now has the ability download malware (viruses, rootkits, Trojan horses, key-loggers, etc.) to your computer. This malware could then lead to future problems.

This may be another tip-off: the Caller ID on the phone says

*(Continued on page 5)*

(Continued from page 4)

“Microsoft, Tech Support”, or something similar, which gives the appearance of a legitimate number. Remember, he called you. (Spoofing Caller ID information, I’m told, is extremely easy to do, with Voice Over IP technology. Brighthouse or Verizon phones employ VOIP technology.)

A strong indication that a scam may be in progress is that the “Tech Support” technician claims that your computer is “sending out errors”, or is “sending out SPAM”, or is “infected with a new virus that is undetected by current virus protection software”, or something similar. This is an attempt to create fear that the computer is infected and to scare you into taking action to correct the situation.

Another tip-off may be that the Tech Support technician has a heavy foreign accent, but he uses a name that sounds like it is of western origin. He will definitely have an explanation for why he does this, but don’t buy into it. (Though, I have talked to a legitimate Tech Support technician, “Bob”, with a heavy foreign accent from Dell who was very helpful, so this may not be the best way to identify a scam.)

I haven’t gotten a call, yet, but I have heard of many recent experiences. If you do get a call from “Microsoft Tech Support”, just hang up. If you are having a problem with your computer, call the appropriate Tech Support organization, using a number you are confident is correct (not one that you get from a pop-up window). With the number of people in Sun City Center receiving these calls, this area code may be a prime target for these scams.

I’d like to thank Computer Club Member and Instructor, Matt Batt, for bringing the severity of this scam to my attention. Matt has seen the results of many of these scams and has heard of many computer users experiences with this scam.

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the end of the story

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## **Dashlane's Free Automatic Password Changer is a Game Changer**

**By Bob Rankin, Ask Bob Rankin  
December 22, 2014 Column  
Reprinted with Permission**

The “best practices” for password security are 1) make your passwords long and obscure; 2) never write them down where they can be stolen; and 3) change them every 30 days. Unfortunately, all of that is so difficult that it seldom gets done. The key to password security is to make it easy. Read on to learn how you can strengthen and change all your most important passwords in just a few seconds...

Software such as RoboForm and LastPass simplify password management by storing many passwords in an encrypted “vault” and filling them in automatically when they are requested on websites. They all will generate long, complex passwords on demand. You just have to remember one master password to unlock the vault and set a reminder to change passwords monthly.

Password managers have evolved additional features such as auto-filling forms, backing up data and passwords to the cloud, syncing passwords across devices, adding support for two-factor authentication, importing bookmarks and competitors’ password file formats, and so on. Like other security software, password managers are locked in an ever-escalating features war.

Into this fray jumped Dashlane. It does all of the above, including two-factor authentication in version 2.0. If you enable two-factor authentication, Dashlane will text to your phone a code that you must enter manually before your master password will unlock Dashlane’s vault.

### **Dashlane Automatic Password Changer**

It also does a great job of minimizing keystrokes, the second most important function of a password manager. For example, when you want to log in to Facebook you don’t have to choose a profile from a drop-down list, as you do in some other programs. Dashlane recognizes the Facebook log-in screen, fills in your username and password, and even “clicks” the log-in button for you. The log-in screen flashes by so fast you may miss it if you blink.

Dashlane version 2.0 introduces a “security dashboard” where you can review all of your passwords. It highlights weak and outdated passwords, nudging you to strengthen your defenses.

### **Automated Password Changing**

But the more interesting news in the latest version is the Password Changer, which lets you update your passwords with a single click. You select the sites on which you want to change your passwords (about 75 popular sites, including Facebook, Twitter, Google, Amazon and Dropbox are supported). Dashlane will generate new passwords, then automatically login and change your passwords on the selected sites in just seconds.

This is pretty awesome in light of the fact that security breaches like HeartBleed and ShellShock are occurring at an alarming pace, and the best course of action when these things happen is to change all your passwords. Doing it manually is a huge nuisance. Clicking a button to make it happen is (almost) fun.

LastPass, a Dashlane competitor, introduced a password changer feature just a day after Dashlane announced theirs. It supports the Chrome, Safari, and Firefox browsers, but not Internet Explorer. It also lacks the automation offered by the Dashlane password changer. You’ll need to select a site, do the password change, select the next site, and so on. But still, it’s a time saver over logging into each site and navigating to the password change page. I’ll admit that not having this feature in RoboForm has made me dread the task of updating some of my own passwords on a regular basis.

On the downside, cross-platform syncing with Dashlane now costs \$39.99 a year. That means passwords and form data that are stored on your PC are not available on your phone unless you pay. Earlier free versions feature syncing; users are urged to donate voluntarily.

Dashlane also acts as a digital wallet, storing your credit card and even PayPal data securely and filling in their details wherever needed. If you have multiple versions of a profile (e. g., different shipping addresses you’ve used on Newegg.com), Dashlane stores them all and lets you pick one from a drop-down menu.

Dashlane cannot work in the iOS Safari browser thanks to Apple’s developer rules; neither can any other password manager. Dashlane gets around this with its own mini-browser, which you must open whenever you want to supply a password on an iPhone or iPad.

Aside from the premium syncing fee, Dashlane is a fine option for a password manager and digital wallet. I’ve been using the paid version of RoboForm for years, so I’ll be considering a change when my next renewal comes due.

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the end of the story

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## The Tip Corner – December 2014

By Bill Sheff, Lehigh Valley Computer Group, Pennsylvania

December 2014 issue, The LVCG Journal

[www.lvcg.org](http://www.lvcg.org)

[nsheff\(at\)aol.com](mailto:nsheff(at)aol.com)

Since this is the last Tip Corner for 2014, and as most of you know Spreadsheets are my passion, I am devoting this issue to a bevy of tips strictly for the Excel user (but don't tell anyone but almost all of them can be used in Open or Libre Office. But first, a eagle-eyed reader in Colorado noticed a line missing from one of my tips in the November issue, so I am repeating it here. Sorry about that.

### XP and Banking

I usually don't profess to follow some of the paranoid warnings of some people, however, I have to suggest that the very last thing you should be doing with a Windows XP computer is banking on line. Security support for Windows XP ended last April, and it's even worse if you happen to be using Internet Explorer. The highest version of IE supported in XP is 8 and that browser is also without any security support. You're slightly safer using Firefox or Chrome, but with XP receiving no security support from Microsoft, your system could be a prime target.

You should definitely stop banking online until you have another operating system.

### Text to Columns

If you ever prepared a list of names, and put both first and last in name in the same column, tsk, tsk. Now you know better. But what do you do with that list of over 200 friends all in one column? Select the data (highlight the column) then on the Data tab click Text to Columns, then choose to separate them based on what delimiter is used (usually either spaces or commas). It works like magic. This tip is also handy if you downloaded some data in CSV format where the data is all in the first column, but separated by a fixed number of spaces or period.

### Paste Special to Transpose

Over the last few years changing from rows to columns got easier. What you do is COPY the data, and then select PASTE SPECIAL and pick the Transpose box. Another great helpful command.

### Paste Special with Formulas

While we are looking at the Paste Special command here is another helpful hint. Suppose you wanted to change a list of numbers from decimal to percentages. You don't want the numeral 1 to be 100% but rather 1%. So rather than you having to divide all the numbers by 100 using the Paste Special comes to the rescue. That's where Paste Special comes in. First, type 100 in a cell and copy it. Then, select all the numbers you want reformatted, select Paste Special, click the "Divide" radio button, and olla as they say in France. Use this procedure to also add, subtract, or multiply numbers.

### Conditional Formatting

If you have a need to change the way a cell looks based on the data, Conditional Formatting is the way to go. Using Conditional Formatting allows you to make cells stand out based on the criteria you select. Not only can you change colors, but you can draw borders around cells. Even little graph can be built into the cells making it

easier to visualize positions in a range. Use the Highlighted Cells Rules sub-menu to create more rules to look for things, such text that contains a certain string of words, recurring dates, duplicate values, etc. There's even a greater than/less than option so you can compare number changes.

### Validate Data to Make Drop Downs

This is one I use, and also demo'd at some of the Novice Sig meetings. You can create a drop-down menu of selections just like the form fillers put out by companies that restricts the choices that can be made. Highlight a cell, go to the Data tab, and click Data Validation. Under "Allow:" select "List." Then in the "Source:" field, type a list, with commas between the options. Or, you could click the button next to the Source field and go back into the same sheet to select a data series. You can hide that data and it will still work. Data Validation is also a good way to restrict data entered—for example, give a date range, and people cannot enter any dates before or after what you specify. You can even create an error message they tells them what they did wrong.

### Insert Excel Data into a Word Document

Way back when, this was another of the extremely difficult tasks. Today it is a snap. Whether you're copying data cells or a full-blown graphical chart, just copy and paste 1, 2, 3. There is one caveat to be aware of., This is a link-and-embed process—if you change the data in the spreadsheet, it'll change in the Word doc or PowerPoint PPT, as well. To avoid this, use the Word Paste Special tool for or, when taking it from Excel, use the Copy Special option to paste the graphic into any program at all.

### AutoFill

When I was a mere lad in terms of spreadsheet abilities, the only way we could make a list of say one to a hundred was to type a 1 in the first cell (say A1), go down to the next cell (A2) and type in the formula =A1+1. Then copy cell A2 down the other 98 rows. Weren't we the clever ones. Today making a list has come a long way. You start typing usually just the first two cells of your list. Highlight the cells and note that the curser has turned into a type of cross called a fill handle. Drag the fill handle down as far as you want the list to go. The list fills up. This works with more than just numbers. Dates, days of the week, etc. can usually benefit from the fill handle. You can fill in up a column or in either direction in a row. And there is more! You can Auto Fill without much of a pattern. Again, pick a cell or cells, move to the fill handle, click, and drag. You'll get a menu of options. The more data you input at first, the better the Fill Series option will do creating your AutoFill options.

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*the end of the story*

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## The Tip Corner – January 2015

By Bill Sheff, Lehigh Valley Computer Group, Pennsylvania

January 2015 issue, The LVCG Journal

[www.lvcg.org](http://www.lvcg.org)

[nsheff\(at\)aol.com](mailto:nsheff(at)aol.com)

Here it is, the start of another year. Happy New Year Everyone.

Looking back on what has transpired in the computer field takes my breath away. Take memory for example. In the 30 plus years of personal computing, memory has gone from 32 Mbs to double digit Gbs

*(Continued on page 7)*



(Continued from page 6)

and machines, even laptops, now come with quad core CPUs. Storage space has become cheaper and cheaper. I was shopping the other day and saw a Seagate external hard drive of four TB and it cost just a few bucks more than the one TB I purchased a few months ago. Price? \$137! WOW! Registries have increased, and even the tablets have increased in RAM and storage. On the programming side we now have machines that have sophisticated Text to Speech and Speech to Text. I use a text-to-speech program to read my spreadsheet numbers so I can double check them. I remember sitting with another person as we read to each other to double check. We can now do it by ourselves. Video editing using free NLE (non-linear editing) programs is a snap, and they even break the film down into scenes based on time or change of scene so you can drag and drop in a second. If you are an old 8mm camera guy you must remember cutting, numbering and hanging up scenes so you could arrange and edit your home movies. The list goes on and on. But with all these great improvements we still can use some help on how to use them. so...On To The Tips.

### **Firefox 4.0 Quick Find**

Long for a keyword to help you search an article? You can hit Ctrl>F and type in your query, but in Firefox 4 just hit, the / key on your keyboard (located just to the left of the Shift key) and start typing.

### **Windows Copy as Path**

When you right-click on a file or a folder you brings up an action menu with basic choices, like "Open" or "Copy." If you hold down the Shift key when you right click in Windows the usual menu that pops up will now include an option called "Copy as Path." This will copy the entire path of the file or folder to your clipboard, and allows you to paste it wherever you want. This is useful once you've located a file in Explorer and you want to upload it to a Web site. So, instead of taking the time to browse for the file on the site, you can just copy and paste its path directly.

### **Print part of an email or other text**

While this is really a simple copy and paste exercise some people seem to have a problem with the concept, so here are some pointers and an explanation.

When you highlight and right-click on what you would like to copy the highlighted portion goes into the Window's clipboard.

You do not see it, but it is there.

You can open another email or a blank word document or Notepad.

You can then click Paste, and the text appears.

If you copied some pictures along with the text that you do not want, instead of just right-clicking, go to Edit>Paste Special and click on unformatted text.

None of the graphics will be included.

You can then send out the email or save the text document as usual.

### **What's In A Word?**

To keep from overusing a word when writing we go to the shelf and bring down a thesaurus. Well forget Roget, here are some thesaurus

sites you might be interested in.

### **The Cook's Thesaurus**

If you need a food substitute this is the site to go to. But it does more. It also has information, pronunciations, pictures and more!.

On the main page, there is a featured section where you'll find the Ingredient of the Month. You will learn how to cook it, what to serve with it, and even what to look for when buying it.

Further down you will find a listing of categories. Everything is there from fruits to vegetables, flavorings, baking supplies, fats and oils and even equipment. Each category breaks down into a list of items that fit the category you can explore further. Along with the food substitutes you get an education about the ingredients and equipment you cook with. Find it at: <http://www.foodsubs.com/>

### **Open Office and Libre Office**

The document writer in these two free suites have a way to find substitute words. Right-click on the word to be changed. Towards the bottom of the list that opens you will see Synonyms. You will see a list of other words that can be used. Choose one and it will replace the one you started with.

If none of those words suit you, proceed to the Thesaurus. Like everything else there is more than one way to get there. While in Synonyms select Thesaurus at the bottom of the synonyms list. Or you could also go to the Tools menu, Language sub-menu, Thesaurus choice. But the fastest was is just highlight the word and use Ctrl>F7. Ctrl>F7 also works in MS Word. For those using Word 2007 and later the thesaurus is found on the Review ribbon. OK, and now for you texters. Being limited to 140 characters certainly puts a damper on the creative juices, but have no fear, just take a trip to [IroniSans.com/thrs/](http://IroniSans.com/thrs/). You type in a long word click the search button and it gives you a shorter synonym. To find out more about the Thrs, check out the "Why a shorter thesaurus?" link under the search field. It will tell you all about the site and why it was made.

So now you should never be at a loss for words.

### **I Love My XP What Can I Do?**

XP is user-friendly, and a lot has changed in the 12 years since XP was launched. But now that Microsoft has ending support, XP is highly vulnerable to external threats such as viruses and malware.

While we know that updating to Vista, Win7 and Win8 are valid options there is one more option that should be considered - Ubuntu.

Ubuntu is a Linux operating system and is considered a superior system to XP.

You may not be familiar with Linux. It's an operating system for computers, like Windows. And while Linux started out with text only operations it is now a fully operating GUI system. While I am a Windows User and have slowly migrated up to Win8, for those that have continued to use XP and like it, you might want to consider the switch. Especially for those older machines with minimum CPU and storage.

The switch from Windows XP to Linux Ubuntu may not prove to be the horrific experience that you might imagine. And while the family of Linux users pales beside Windows, some consider it a much better system. It will give you much more than you get from Windows XP

(Continued from page 7)

or even from Windows 7 or 8.

Here are some of the pluses with Linux Ubuntu you might want to consider.

**Security:** Presently, Ubuntu claims to be a virus free OS, but just like Apple, once there is a community of users the hackers will arrive. But since XP is no longer supported the risks are greater that malicious software is out there.

**Speed:** Older computers with minimum resources have a tendency to clog when using windows. Ubuntu runs for a long time without any lag since it uses a lesser amount of resources and boosts performance in older machines.

**Cost:** Hello! Ubuntu is free. And no product key is needed.

**Space:** Ubuntu occupies much less hard drive space than XP. Other versions of Ubuntu such as Xbuntu, take up even less space and provide almost the same functionality.

**Drivers:** There's no headache in installing drivers for audio, video and graphics from external sources in Ubuntu. The OS automatically detects your hardware and installs the latest drivers. Even if you have lost your drivers, you can still acquire sound and video drivers automatically while using Ubuntu.

**Software:** Ubuntu has lots of useful software absolutely free with no catches or hidden charges. Software like Firefox, Chrome, Libre Office, Open Office and many more can be found at Ubuntu Software center. Another special software, Wine, helps you run most of your Windows based software without any trouble at all.

**Customization:** Ubuntu users have full customization options. You have the choice to change your desktop colors, task bar sizes and make custom side bars.

So if you want to hang on to your old machine, Ubuntu offers a unique opportunity. So think about it, and perhaps give it a try. Actually, you can even have both systems on your machine while you take the time to so if it appeals to you.

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the end of the story

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## What's New in Avast Antivirus 2015?

By Bob Rankin, Ask Bob Rankin  
December 8, 2014 Column  
Reprinted with Permission

The holiday shopping season starts earlier each year, and so does the release of major annual updates of security software. The 2015 edition of Avast Free Antivirus arrived before Thanksgiving, for instance. Avast 2015 contains some features never before seen in Avast. Read on for the full story, and learn how you can get the paid version for free...

First off, there's a home network scanner in Avast 2015 that I have not seen in any other security suite. When launched, the network scanner checks your router's administrator username and password, warning you to change them if they're still set at factory defaults.

It warns of unencrypted Wi-Fi connections, or those encrypted with the easily hacked WEP protocol. It checks to make sure your DNS has not been redirected and that your router is not accessible from

the Internet. If there is a problem, Avast 2015 will display step-by-step instructions for solving it – if your router model is one that Avast supports. Otherwise, you'll have to consult the user manual or Google it.

These are "front door" security precautions that many users miss, so I applaud Avast for these additions to the already comprehensive protection that this free security suite provides.

### Avast 2015 Review

With the 2015 edition, Avast seems to be morphing into an all-in-one system maintenance and security suite, much like Advanced System Care, PC Matic and other utility suites. Avast's emphasis is on maintenance issues that affect security, but they may also improve system performance.

Avast's "Browser Cleanup" feature is not what its name implies to most people. Instead of clearing the browser's file cache, browsing history, etc., Avast cleans up unwanted toolbars and plugins, eliminating points of vulnerability to hackers and places where malware likes to hide.

Keeping all of one's software up-to-date is another security issue. Avast 2015's "Software Updater" makes it a breeze. You can set it to notify you when updates are available or just install them automatically. This module checks for updates of operating system, browser, and popular applications, but if you don't see some of your apps in the tool's list you'll have to update them on your own.

### Free or Paid Version?

"Avast Free Antivirus" is the name of the free version of the Avast suite. "Avast Internet Security" is a paid version that offers extra features such as Anti-Hijack Protection (to secure your online banking and other sensitive accounts), a Silent Firewall (to shield you from hackers) and an Anti-Spam module. The cost is \$39/year, but there's a way to earn a free copy.

Want to get a free copy of Avast 2015? You can, with Bob's Avast Friend Referral Link.

<http://www.avast.com/en-us/get/6Y7QxHvD> You can even get the PAID VERSION FOR FREE by earning Avast Karma Points with your own referral link. What's this all about? Full details are at the end of this article.

Avast Free 2015 also includes demo versions of premium security tools. The SecureLine VPN option is a free three-day trial of a fully encrypted proxy service; using it hides your IP address and Web surfing activity even from your own ISP. A one-year subscription costs \$60. "GrimeFighter" analyzes your system for junk files, bad registry entries, and other junk that can slow your system; but to fix the problems you'll need to pay \$20. (Or you can use Privazer, the free cleaner-upper I recommend.)

The free Mobile Backup trialware comes with a 2 GB Dropbox account and stores your mobile device's data in the cloud; the premium version costs \$15.

The main Avast interface screen includes a "Store" button that reveals a host of premium and freemium products, an indication that competition in the Internet Security marketplace is heating up, or that profit margins which rely on converting free users to paid customers are getting tighter.

I've been using Avast for over a year since switching from AVG, and

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I'm giving the new Avast 2015 version a big thumbs up for some innovative new features and continued comprehensive protection from malware threats.

#### Karma Points and Free Avast Software

If you have registered as a member of the Avast online community you will see in the upper-right corner of Avast Free's main screen your registered email address and a notation such as, "540 karma." So-called "karma points" are awarded for various acts of participation in the community, and even for being a user of Avast Free for a long time. Referring friends, posting to forums, trying a demo feature, buying a premium feature, etc., all earn you more karma points and "status" in the community.

With enough Karma points, you can earn a free copy of Avast Internet Security. Here's the fastest way to do that. On the Avast main screen, click the ACCOUNT tab. Login to your Avast account (or create one if needed). Next, click on the colored circle under the Logout link at the top right. On the next screen, you'll see a gray box that says "Recommend Avast and earn Karma". Click that link, and you'll be given your own referral link, which you can use to invite friends via Email, Facebook, Twitter or Google+. Recommending Avast to 7 friends can earn you a free year of Avast Internet Security (14 friends, two years; 21 friends, three years). Your friends must download and install Avast via your referral link.

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*the end of the story*

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**It Takes a Village**  
**(of Devices to Meet My Computing Needs)**  
**By Greg Skalka, President,**  
**Under the Computer Hood User Group, CA**  
**October 2014 issue, Drive Light**  
**[www.uchug.org](http://www.uchug.org)**  
**president (at) uchug.org**

I'm not sure I agree with all popular applications of the phrase "It takes a village," but it does seem to me that it now requires the contributions of a number of computing devices to allow me to function successfully in society. Unlike my adult children, I can still remember what life was like in The Time Before Computers. How did we ever survive without the Internet, spreadsheets, email, Facebook, GPS, smart phones and iEverything? Our lives have become filled with the alphabet soup of mp3, pdf, DVD, url, USB, HDMI, PDA and Wi-Fi. The digital electronics revolution we have enjoyed these past 30 years has brought us all this capability, convenience and electronic stuff. It wasn't always this way.

My first computer was a Timex Sinclair 1000 (ZX81), which cost \$99 in the early 1980's. It was more of a toy than a useful tool. By around 1985 I had bought a real computer, a Zenith Z-157, which was an IBM PC-XT clone, for around \$1500. I entered the world of documents and spreadsheets, and later got to use a dial-up modem to connect to bulletin boards. My wife couldn't really understand the computer, so for a time I was the only user.

As we moved from DOS to more user-friendly operating systems like Windows (3.1, 98 and XP) and the functionality of computers increased (graphics, photos, the Internet), more of the family wanted to join in. Soon my wife had her own computer, then so did the kids, then we had to have laptops, followed by a netbook, then eReaders, tablets

and smart phones.

Today my computer "village" consists of 7.1 devices - two desktop computers, three laptops, a PDA, an iPad and part of an iPhone (I count my wife's iPhone as 0.1 of a device for myself as I only have a dumb phone, but get to take advantage of her phone's Internet access when we are out together). These are all devices necessary for me to fulfill my computing goals. Some obviously provide unique capabilities that others do not (tablet for portability, desktop for performance), but others are still in use do to legacy issues.

There are some big advantages to having my computer usage spread over a number of devices. There is some redundancy in having multiple devices on which to surf the web or get email. With the increased use of computers in our financial affairs, it is essential to have back-up devices in case your primary bill-paying computer suffers a failure. With multiple devices there is a much better chance of being able to do what you want and successfully run the applications you want. I occasionally will have difficulty getting a particular new program to install and run correctly, or work with a particular peripheral device; sometimes trying it on a different computer makes the difference. Applications can also be distributed among the devices, so you don't wind up with one computer jam packed with programs (that you can never find the icon for). It can also help solve the problem of some programs seemingly not wanting to be installed with others. Having several platforms to work with can also increase overall usage security, as confidential computing can be segregated to some devices and risky web browsing to others. There is also the obvious advantage of having different devices that are better suited to different tasks (such as smart phones and tablets for mobile use and desktops for writing this column and photo editing). Different operating systems and environments can also provide advantages and optimization of the user experience.

There are also some big drawbacks to spreading your user experience over 7.1 devices. Now I have eight devices to maintain, keep track of, learn and, of course, pay for. It is also more costly in terms of software, as now you likely need to multiple copies of security and office programs. It multiplies the chore of making sure all devices have all their updates, are free of malware and are backed up. It also requires a lot more time to learn new operating systems, and there can be problems moving files between devices when you have spent most of your computing life in only one operating environment.

My oldest villager is my desktop computer, a 2005 Pentium 4 machine I built myself, running Windows XP. It should not be running any more, as I bought a new Windows 7 desktop computer a while ago; I just have not had time to set up the new computer. When I do, I'll have new office and photo editing software. Until then, this old P4 computer is the only one I have with some of that specialized software. In addition, it has software to support my flatbed scanner, my PDA, my handheld GPS and other old peripheral devices; these likely won't work with my new computer. I'll probably spend a lot of time trying to get these old accessory devices to work with my new desktop, and in the end have to either give up on their use or continue to keep this old XP machine running off in a corner somewhere.

It is a similar situation with my old Dell Celeron laptop; it has been replaced by a newer laptop but must be run occasionally to interface with old accessories. In this case, it is one item, an automotive OBDII diagnostic monitor that keep me from retiring the Dell. I'm more hopeful that I can get the OBDII monitor interface software to run under Win7, but until I get around to trying it, I must keep this old XP laptop in the mix. Both of my remaining XP computers require special care to keep them safe and secure. Right now I keep them off my home network, transferring files between them and my networked computers

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with a USB Flash drive.

I've had my Pharos GPS PDA / Pocket PC for over six years. It keeps my personal calendar of activities, something my brain stopped being able to fully handle some time ago. Before I got my PDA, I used those DayTimer organizer notebooks. I love that I can sync my PDA to Outlook and write Word documents (it runs a Pocket PC version of Windows). Unfortunately, my old P4 desktop is the only PC I have running now with Outlook. I have a pro version of Office (containing Outlook) ready for my new desktop computer, but I fear the Microsoft ActiveSync program for the PDA may not run under Win7. I don't know what I will do when my PDA dies or I lose it, as I use it almost every day without fail. PDAs are now extinct in the wild, so I'll probably have to put my calendar on a smart phone. Until that day, I'm happy that my personal activities are safely not in a cloud or in view of Apple or Google or some cell phone service provider.

When it came time to start replacing our old XP computers with Windows 7 machines, I let my wife get the first upgrade. I say I did that because I'm a nice husband; for a time her new Acer desktop PC was the most powerful computer in the house. A cynic might suggest that I let my wife be the Win7 guinea pig, so I could learn the new OS offline from my normal computing activities. In any case, she did then have the best computer in the house, so I sped up a presentation project by installing slide show software on her PC. It is still the go-to computer for slide shows. We also bought a household receipt scanner and software for my wife and me to share, so naturally it got installed on her desktop PC.

After my wife had a bad time with our pathetic netbook on her first business trip, I bought her a Fujitsu 17" Win7 laptop. She now had the two most powerful computers in the house. She didn't use it much at home so it was available to me. I used it to file our taxes with TurboTax and connect to video capture hardware. When my wife gave me a Panasonic HD video camera, I installed the video download and editing software on her laptop. It is still the primary computer for those functions.

I prefer a smaller, more portable laptop, so after seeing how much they had come down in price, I bought myself a Fujitsu 14" Win7 notebook PC. When my proprietary email client became corrupted on my P4 desktop, I switched to Thunderbird on my new laptop. It is now my primary computer, but I have held back from installing a lot on it, knowing that I will be replacing my desktop PC.

I bought myself a cheap (\$70) Android tablet to see what all the fuss was about, but found it was very short on power and capabilities. While it could kick my old Z-157's sorry old silicon behind at about 1/20th the price, it really didn't render web pages very well. I got lucky and won an iPad Mini in a contest, and found it far superior at web access. I always take it traveling as it is a great little portable device for getting on the Internet, but I've not done much else with it. Now that my wife has an iPhone, along with an expensive data plan, I'm looking forward to getting instant web information when we are traveling. Unfortunately, I don't have the coin for one of my own.

With my village of devices, I'm able to do almost anything I need to do in the world of computers, at least in theory. It is a lot of work keeping everything running and communicating, so I'm working on consolidating my village and eliminating the older villagers. Still, with the advantages that different devices bring to the user experience, I'm sure I'll continue to rely on a small hamlet of devices for my computing needs.

the end of the story



## From the Presidents, ..... Editor's desk



### Required reading:

- The AMD A10-7800 CPU**  
..... by Daniel Woodard    **PAGE # 3**
- Tech Support Scam -Received a Tech Support call lately?-**  
..... by Phil Sorrentino    **PAGE # 4**
- Dashlane's Free Automatic Password Changer is a Game Changer**    ..... by Bob Rankin    **PAGE # 5**
- The Tip Corner – December 2014**  
..... by Bill Sheff    **PAGE # 6**
- The Tip Corner – January 2015**  
..... by Bill Sheff    **PAGE # 6**
- What's New in Avast Antivirus 2015?**  
..... by Bob Rankin    **PAGE # 8**
- It Takes a Village**  
..... by Greg Skalka    **PAGE # 9**
- Mac Tips of the Month**  
..... by Ernie Cox, Jr.    **PAGE # 10**

Read all of the above, there will be a test! PJK.

PJK

the end of the story

**IMPORTANT NOTICE:** The PACC web site is working. You are again able to get your copy of PACC TALK there. If you have a problem with viewing it with Adobe Reader, use another PDF reader, such as Nitro, to view the PACC TALK.  
**PACC Web Site:** <http://pacc.apcug.org/>

### Mac Tips of the Month

**Ernie Cox, Jr., Member, Computer Club of Green Valley, AZ**  
**December 2014 issues, Green Bytes**

[www.ccgva.org](http://www.ccgva.org)  
[ecoxjr \(at\) cox.net](mailto:ecoxjr@cox.net)

Create, Find, & Modify Notes with Siri in iOS  
<http://osxdaily.com/2013/03/11/create-find-modify-notes-with-siri-in-ios/>

How to Format Text & Insert Pictures Into Notes in iOS  
<http://osxdaily.com/2014/11/20/format-text-insert-images-notes-ios/>

50+ Tips & Tricks for the iPhone 6 & iPhone 6 Plus!  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tlh-DudoPfl>

iPhone 6 – Complete Beginners Guide  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KSgOm6hW2Zw>

How to manage your iCloud security and Apple Pay settings from the Web  
<http://appleinsider.com/articles/14/11/29/how-to-manage-your-icloud-security-and-apple-pay-settings-from-the-web>

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**Dues: \$25 per year.**

**Make your check out to: PACC and send it with your application to:**

**Treasurer, PACC, 216 Cashmere Court, Cranberry Twp., PA, 16066**

*cut here.....cut here*

### ***PACC HELP LINE***

Help is available to PACC members on various computer topics by contacting one of those listed below. It is recommended that the initial contact with any of these experts should be made via the PACC WEB SITE. In this way others can benefit from the questions and responses. Be courteous and call only during the listed times.

| NAME             | COMPUTER AREA                       | PHONE        | TIME        |
|------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------|-------------|
| Agrawala, Vishnu | Hardware                            | 724-553-8051 | 3 - 6:00 pm |
| Cutrara, Phil    | Geoworks                            | 766-0274     |             |
| Fisher, Bill     | Cobol, Word Perfect                 | 367-8996     | 7 - 9:00 pm |
| Konecny, P.      | Windows, DOS 6.2x, MS IE,, Hardware | 795-6075     | 8 - 9:00 pm |

If you would like to become PACC HELP LINE volunteer inform the editor by sending e-mail to: [pacccomm@aol.com](mailto:pacccomm@aol.com)

### **FOR SALE**

**HD external USB 2.0, 400  
GB Western Digital, \$30**  
**Contact Vishnu**  
**724-553-8051**  
**[vka@zoominternet.net](mailto:vka@zoominternet.net)**

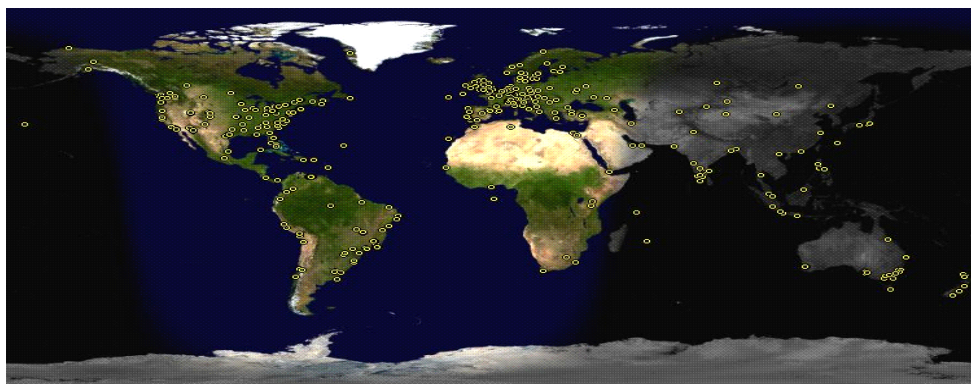
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## **NEXT PACC MEETING IS ON May 17, 2015**

**PACC 1975 - 2015  
IN ITS FORTY-FIRST YEAR**



# **PACC TALK**

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## ***NEXT MEETING: May 17, 2015***

The Pittsburgh Area Computer Club (PACC) holds its meetings the **THIRD** Sunday of each month. The next meeting will be in room 311 at **Point Park University**, Wood St. and Blvd. of the Allies. The doors open at 11:00 am and close at 4:30 pm. Bring your PC!

**FOR SOME YEARS THE PACC TALK WAS AVAILABLE IN DIGITAL FORMAT.** Therefore, as of January 12, 2012, the membership dues are payable in the first month of the calendar year.

Renew your Memberships !!! Send a check or money order for \$25 made out to 'PACC' and addressed to Treasurer, PACC, 216 Cashmere Court, Cranberry Twp., PA, 16066.

**Classified ads.** Buy, Sell, Trade. Members may place free ads (up to 5 lines). Articles should be prepared in plain ASCII text. WITHOUT formatting. Deadline for articles is the 25th of the month. Send them to P.J. Konecny, P.O. Box 557, Monroeville, PA 15146.

**PACC homepage can be found at:** <http://pacc.apcug.org>

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