

# MONITOR

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Next Meeting  
Tuesday, June 14

## Genealogy 101

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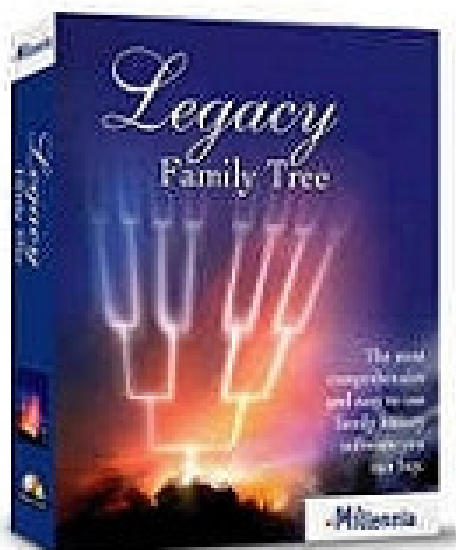
## Legacy Family Tree Basics, Part 1

by Bill Ellis

*Computer Users of Erie, PA*

**S**top, look, and learn. Our hectic life has programmed us to get things done quickly. After all, there's so much to do and so little time. As an example, I work on my family history almost every day. If I'm not researching my family tree, then I'm entering newly found information into my genealogy program. I'm doing this all the while I'm trying to maintain a home and family, which I'm sure you know consumes a lot of our time. With all these demands, we tend to hasten through most of our least important tasks so we can give more

time to the important stuff. At the end of the day, we also would like a little time to relax and unwind.



Even though we enjoy our computers, I think our computer tasks fall into that least important task list. Hence, we get the computer tasks done quickly, always using the same methods and/or steps that we have always used, because it's quicker, and we're never really looking at how we could improve on doing these tasks.

We're going to look at some of the basics of the Legacy program that we use in our genealogy group. I'm sure that some of these items will help improve our computer and genealogical skills. I'll be starting at the opening screen, which we usually look at briefly, if at all, before we head to the guts of the Legacy program. This is where we cheat ourselves because we don't take the time to stop, look and learn.

The first thing I like to see, when starting Legacy, is the Legacy Home screen. This gets me into that Stop, Look, and Learn frame of mind. If I started Legacy in any other screen, such as the Family View screen, I would simply start entering the family data that I had gathered. Beside the Legacy Home and Family screens, you can also start Legacy by opening the Pedigree, Descendant, Chronology, Index, or Research screens. You can also decide to open Legacy by going to the last screen viewed when you closed the Legacy program the last time you used it. The Options menu, at the top of the window, is where you can make any one these choices. Click Options and then click on Customize and go to the General Tab. The Startup View panel in the General tabs section is where you make your selection as to which screen you would like Legacy to start up in.

In addition to starting up in the Legacy Home view, I also like to see the Tool Tips that Legacy has to offer and I start them at the same time. In order to see the Tool Tips, click on the View menu. Click on Tips Window at the very bottom of the pop up window. You can get to this Tips Window from almost anywhere in Legacy. If you want the Tips Window to show up every time you start the Legacy program, as I do, just select that option at the very bottom of the Tips Window screen.

Some of the stuff in this Tips Window is pretty straightforward. You'll look at some of these tips and say, "Gee Whiz" I know that, 'cause I'm already doing this. Believe me, they are not always that simple. So, don't dismiss the feature. Some tips are quite thought provoking. So much so, that you will have to use the Show Me button for an explanation. The Show Me button will guide through whatever steps are needed to complete the task of that particular tip window.

Another great item in the Tips Window is the What's New button. Every time you update Legacy the information under this button will change. There's a lot of new stuff under this button, so take a few minutes to look through "What's New." For example, in the latest version, Legacy has added a Best Fit button for the children's column. We used to select one, two or three columns to list the kids. In days of yore, large families were the norm. With three columns and five kid's spaces in each column we recorded up to fifteen kids for a family and we could see all their names. However, in later years, when we became more aware of the cost of raising a family, the offspring became fewer and fewer. However, if you selected to use

fifteen spaces for kids, three columns with five spaces each, every family got fifteen spaces even if they only had one, two or three kids. The best fit button for children will adjust the columns for each family, depending how hefty their herd of children is or isn't. This gives your family view screen a better look.

Another new feature is a beefier search engine. You can search an entire file for missing information, such as given names, marriage dates, death dates, etc. You can also search for missing sources for facts or events. I know I'm guilty of not entering complete information or sources, mostly because I don't have them at the time of entry. I should have, however, immediately made a To Do list for the item that still needs my attention, so I don't forget it. Alas, I'm not really swift doing that either and the item is soon forgotten. This is just what we've been talking about. Too much to do and not enough time to do it right. This heftier search options has been a blessing to me, because it helps me correct my ineptness.

Now, I can search for the items I didn't have time to do the first time around and either fill in the missing information or make a proper To Do list so I handle them at a later date. The Legacy program can help us work quicker and better if we just take a moment to Stop, Look, and Learn.

System Requirements:

Windows 7, Windows Vista, Windows XP, Windows ME\*, Windows 98\*, Windows NT, Windows 2000 (Legacy runs on newer Macs with Windows installed under Bootcamp, Parallel or Fusion. Legacy runs on Linux machines with a Windows emulator like VMWare or Sun's Virtual Box)

Note: Runs on both 32bit and 64bit Windows platforms.

Legacy Family Tree Genealogy software: <http://www.legacyfamilytree.com/>

*From the December 2010 issue, Horizons, The Official Journal of CUE.*

## eBook Readers Compared

by Constance Brown

*President, Canton/Alliance/Massillon User Group, OH*

**T**echnology with new capabilities and applications is constantly available. It can be difficult to stay focused on what will be most suitable for our requirements when we are constantly wowed by the latest innovations.

Suppose you wish to read eBooks and listen to music. How many pieces of equipment will allow you to do this? Here are a few: computer, web book, a variety of phones, iPad, some mp3 players, some GPS devices, and some eBook readers.

The cross application of many of these devices is amazing and sometimes confusing. In January we heard a presentation from the Stark County District Library about eBooks and eAudio books and were introduced to a variety of devices that can be used to check out these Books. The library has a links to lists of compatible and incompatible devices at <http://www.overdrive.com/Resources/DRC/Default.aspx>.

During the presentation, I became interested in the comparison between Apple's iPad and Barnes and Nobles Nookcolor. Both of them have one disadvantage when compared to other readers such as other Nook products, Sony, Kobo, or Kindle: the screen is not E Ink or E Paper.



That means the battery is being drained when it is in use and that it will be more tiring to the eyes and perhaps impossible to read in bright light. However, Nookcolor lets you read books and magazines in full color and works both in Wi-Fi and 3G networks. It has 8 Gig of internal memory, enough to hold 6,000 books, and is expandable to 32 Gig. Over 2 million book titles are available, and it has internal support for Microsoft Word, Excel, and PowerPoint.

Additional features include resizable text and graphics with AliveTouch™, audio, Read to Me, Keep your last page, read between devices, LendMe™ technology, borrowing, and you can share updates on Social sites like Facebook® and Twitter®. It runs with the Android™ Operating System. The price tag is \$249. More information is available at <http://www.barnesandnoble.com/nook/index.asp>. Here the comparison stops. Nookcolor was not designed for Internet browsing or communicating via email.

Apple's iPad comes with 16 Gig to 64 Gig of internal memory. Some iPads are Wi-Fi only and others are either 3G or Wi-Fi. The price tag varies from \$499-\$829. The iPad is much more than an eBook reader. It offers Internet access and applications. It is still awaiting an app to be released that will let the reader view eBooks full screen. You can page through websites, write an email, flick through photos, or watch a movie with just the touch of a finger. The 3G data plan is through ATT and starts at \$14.99 per month. It has many computer capabilities, especially when it comes to browsing the Internet and reading email.

When it comes to comparing eBook readers that use E ink and E paper, it is a bit more difficult to make a selection. The Kindle is great, but doesn't allow for you to check out eBooks from the library at this time. Kobo from Borders does not allow you to listen to eAudio and requires that books be loaded from a computer. Sony and Nook have their own trade-offs with weight, bulkiness, and a screen that is sometimes difficult to read in sunlight in the case of the Sony. So if an e Reader is in your future, you will have to select what best meets your needs. Having an eReader certainly beats having to carry heavy, bulky books through the airport in order to satiate your reading appetite as you wait for your next flight!

*From the February 2011 issue of The Memory Map.*

## How to Remove "Rogue Anti-Virus"

by Ira Wilsker

This has been a very busy week for me; not just the final exams I am typing and the papers that I am grading for the end of the semester, but I have been inundated with requests for help in removing what is known generically as "rogue anti-virus." These recent frantic requests for assistance have been from a prominent local attorney, a local politician, a small business owner, fellow faculty members, students, neighbors, and a panoply of other people, all of whom had inadvertently downloaded one (or two!) of the hundreds of variations of the same malware under a variety of names.

While I have been removing this malware from a handful of computers every week for the past few years, last week may have set some type of record for me. According to Wikipedia ([en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rogue\\_antivirus](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rogue_antivirus)), "Rogue security software (or rogueware) is a form of computer malware that deceives or misleads users into paying for the fake or simulated removal of malware, or that installs other malware. Rogue security software, in recent years (2008–2011), has become a growing and serious



security threat in desktop computing. ... Once installed, the rogue security software may then attempt to entice the user into purchasing a service or additional software.”

The current crop of rogue software is explicitly designed to bypass or defeat most installed anti-virus and other software, and will often disable or destroy the installed security software, allowing for additional follow-on attacks. Almost all of the computers I cleaned recently had major name-brand security software installed which had been recently updated prior to the infection, but which had been neutralized by the rogue software. The original security software will often still appear in the toolbar near the clock, and even appear to function and update, but it is likely deactivated. While there are several hundred official sounding titles of this rogue software ([en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_rogue\\_security\\_software](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_rogue_security_software)), they tend to be somewhat similar in that they mostly popup a window indicating that the computer is badly infected with a large number of viruses and Trojans, or that there is pornography stored on the hard drive.

The appearance and name of the pseudo security software may be very similar to a legitimate product, even illicitly using the logo and trademarks of legitimate security software products. Almost all have a “click here” button to remove the allegedly detected malware or pornography, and then open another window that requires that the user enter a credit card number in order to activate the rogue software and remove the listed malware. This is all a scam, and there have been media reports that the software to write these illicit programs are “licensed” similar to a multi-level marketed product, with the proceeds divided up among the levels of the criminal bureaucracy.



One recent published report told of a 14 year old Russian boy who makes over \$100,000 a month from this activity. A report listed in Wikipedia says, “An investigation by security researchers into the Antivirus XP 2008 rogue security software found just such an affiliate network, in which members were grossing commissions upwards of \$150,000 over 10 days, from tens of thousands of successful installations.” As an added insult, if the victim does provide his credit card information to the scammer to pay for this useless product (often \$30 to \$50), not just will the alleged infections not be removed, but now his credit card information may be posted for sale or rent on other criminal websites.

Sadly, this may only be the beginning of the problems that the user will likely encounter unless the rogue software is totally annihilated, as the rogue antivirus may also install keyloggers (records key strokes to steal user names, passwords, account numbers), zombies (turns the computer into a spam sending machine under the control of a “bot” master), and other types of malware. The instant the computer is infected, often from clicking on an email link, link on a major search engine, opening up a compromised PDF file, or other vector, the initial takeover of the victim computer has been accomplished.

One of my faculty members, whose computer was protected by an up-to-date major security product, was searching for images using Google to incorporate in a PowerPoint presentation, and clicked on a listed image; rather than the image opening, he instantly infected his computer. A window opened with a knock-off name similar to another major security product, informing him that his computer had over 300 viruses and Trojans infecting it, and that they had to be removed immediately.

Every time he tried to close the pop-up window telling him that his computer was infected, it re-opened. An icon appeared in the toolbar adjacent to his clock that had a balloon that said

that his computer was infected. He rebooted his computer, and at boot it warned that it was infected, and would not run any programs after the boot, only displaying the warning window. He was unable to connect to any website using either Internet Explorer or Firefox, and a secondary security program installed on his computer would not execute when he clicked on its icon.

His computer had been effectively disabled except that clicking on the rogue antivirus window opened another window where he could enter his credit card information that would immediately activate the program, removing all of the infections. From up the hall I heard a terse, "Ira can you come here? My computer says that it has a virus!" On the flash drive always attached to my car keychain I carry several antimaware products, knowing that I will likely be called on to clean an infected computer. I try to keep these updated, frequently downloading updated files. The three programs on my USB flash drive that I use most often to clean computers infected with a rogue antivirus or other malware are the portable version of SuperAntispyware, MalwareBytes, and the Emsisoft Emergency Kit.

The first program that I use to clean an infected computer is the portable version (free) of SuperAntispyware ([superantispyware.com](http://superantispyware.com)). This program is continuously updated throughout the day, and is usually fairly up to date when downloaded. I download the portable version to my USB flash drive (or to the computer's hard drive and then copy it to the flash drive). The filename will typically begin with "SAS" followed by a numerical segment, and then a ".com," and is run directly from the flash drive without any installation. The reason for the random "SASxxxxxx.com" file name is that it would be difficult for malware to specifically block its execution, and being a ".com" rather than a ".exe" makes it easier to load without interference.

To use the SuperAntispyware portable version, I reboot the computer into "Safe Mode" by pressing the F8 key every few seconds, tapping F8 immediately after restarting the computer. When given the choice, I prefer "Safe Mode with Networking," although just "Safe Mode" would be adequate; do not select "Safe Mode with Command Prompt." Boot into Safe Mode (do not choose to restore the computer if offered the choice), insert the flash drive, and run "SASxxxxxx.com" (xxxxxx are the random numbers in the file name). SuperAntispyware will load and offer the user the choice to update the SuperAntispyware signature files (usually OK if Safe Mode with Networking was selected), perform a quick scan, or perform a full scan.

A quick scan will search for the most likely infections in the most common locations, and may only take a few minutes; a full scan may take much longer, sometimes over an hour, but is much more comprehensive and thorough. I quarantine or remove whatever it finds, sometimes requiring a reboot in order to complete the cleaning process. SuperAntispyware has proven to be an effective and reliable utility to remove the rogue antivirus, and for most users is totally adequate to clean a computer of the malware.

I recommend to the user that he downloads and installs the free standard version of SuperAntispyware on his computer, and periodically rescans his computer to verify its lack of malware. To users of the free version, SuperAntispyware often offers a very reasonably priced deal for a "lifetime" upgrade to the Pro version, which offers real time protection and frequent automatic updates, and works in addition to whatever security software that is already installed on the computer. This added layer of security, on top of the other security software, provides substantial additional protection from future malware infections.

I like redundancy, just to make darn sure that the computer is clean and free of malware, so I use a second utility to verify that the computer is safe to use. On my flash drive I have the installer for the free version of MalwareBytes ([malwarebytes.ORG](http://malwarebytes.ORG)), which I use to install Malwarebytes on the computer; I choose to do this even if Malwarebytes is already installed on the computer, as some rogue antivirus explicitly targets the Malwarebytes files, rendering



them inert. This installation can be done either in Safe Mode (with networking), or on a normally booted computer. After the install, Malwarebytes will ask to update its database (yes!) before doing its scan. Clicking on the “Scanner” tab will offer the user the choice of a quick scan or a full scan; as with other products the quick scan may only take a few minutes, while the full scan will take much longer, but is more capable of detecting deeply hidden malware. It is extremely rare that the dynamic duo of SuperAntispyware and Malwarebytes does not perform a 100% cleanup of the malware that was on the computer, as they are both individually extremely effective and reliable at detecting and killing malware.

For those almost unheard times that something undesirable may still inhabit the computer, I use a third program that I have installed on my flash drive, Emsisoft Emergency Kit ([www.emsisoft.com/en/software/eek/](http://www.emsisoft.com/en/software/eek/)). This program is large and extremely powerful, and is run from the flash drive on which it has been installed. The malware database used by Emsisoft is one of the largest in the industry (over 5 million digital signatures) which is very frequently updated, and due to its size, may take several minutes just to perform the update. Emsisoft Emergency Kit may be run from the flash drive in Safe Mode with Networking, or from a fully booted computer; I prefer the safe Mode with Networking, but always attempt an update before scanning. Since the file on the flash drive is an exe file with a known name, some malware products may block its execution. This is precisely why I tend to use the portable version of Super Antispyware first to clear the path, which may then enable the Emsisoft Emergency Kit to run. Due to the massive database which it uses, which makes it one of the most capable antimalware products on the market, Emsisoft Emergency Kit is also among the slowest taking the longest to scan, as it very thoroughly detects and cleans even tiny fragments of malware from the infected computer. Because it is so sensitive, this software may also detect some “false positives,” which is legitimate software that has been detected as malware; for this reason, I explicitly choose to quarantine whatever it detects, rather than delete it. If I later find that an item is in quarantine in error, it is a simple process to restore that item. Still, Emsisoft Emergency Kit is among the best at detecting and killing malware on the computer. Since many of the rogue antivirus products kill the legitimate security software that was originally installed on the computer, it will likely be necessary to install or reinstall a com-prehensive security suite after the computer had been cleaned of malware. It would be a good idea to install these three malware scanners to a flash drive, and keep them up to date, as you may likely need them in the future when least expected. To quote an old proverb, “It is better to have it and not need it, then to need it and not have it.”

#### WEBSITES:

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rogue\\_antivirus](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rogue_antivirus)

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_rogue\\_security\\_software](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_rogue_security_software)

<http://www.techsupportalert.com/best-free-trojan-scanner-trojan-remover.htm>

<http://www.superantispyware.com>

[http://www.malwarebytes.org/products/malwarebytes\\_free](http://www.malwarebytes.org/products/malwarebytes_free)

<http://www.emsisoft.com/en/software/eek/>

## Service Packs Explained (and needed)

by Sandy Berger

*Compu-KISS*

**A**lthough most of us still think of Windows 7 as a brand new operating system, it is, in fact, starting to show its age. Windows 7 made its debut on October 22, 2009. Is one and one-half really old? Well, in the computer world, it is not old, but it is certainly full-

grown. One sign of this is that Microsoft has just released the first Service Pack for Windows 7.

A service pack is a collection of updates, bug fixes, and enhancements for a software program. As you know, Microsoft routinely offers updates for their Windows operating systems. These updates come out weekly and they patch or, you might say, repair the operating system so that they remain safe from hackers. They can also include improvements or enhancements to the operating system. At a certain point in time, Microsoft gathers all of those updates, adds any other updates and enhancements they have, and issues this batch of updates as a service pack. It is also important to note, that when Microsoft issues a service pack, this service pack also makes sure that all of the updates and enhancements work well together and offer good stability for the operating system.

The question that I am most often asked is this, “If I have installed every update that Microsoft has released, do I still need to install the service pack?” The answer is “yes.” Often the service pack contains additional updates and/or enhancements that were not included in the weekly updates. Also, a service pack makes sure that all of the updates are put together properly to make your system run well.

In fact, Microsoft thinks that this is so important that they only support the operating system when it has the proper service packs installed. Each service pack should be installed when it is released. If for some reason, they are installed all at the same time, each is installed sequentially.

So, for Windows XP you should have Service Pack 3 installed. Windows Vista should have Service Pack 2, and Windows 7 should have Service Pack 1. To learn what service pack you have installed, just click on the Start button, right-click on Computer or My Computer, and then click Properties. You will see the service pack listed under the Windows edition.

You can go to the Microsoft website and install a service pack from there, if you happen to be missing one. All service packs from Microsoft are free. If you are using Window 7, the new service pack will be offered to you through Microsoft’s automatic update service. This Windows 7 service pack can take up to 30 minutes and will re-boot your computer. I have installed Window 7, Service Pack 1 on several computers without a problem, but you should be aware that installing a service pack is a big update. Microsoft recommends that you back up your computer before installing a service pack. And to be honest, you should be backing up your computer anyway. So if you don’t have a backup strategy in place, this is a good time to implement one.

The newest version of Internet Explorer – IE 9 is now in testing and it is already available for free download in a beta version. This is by far, the best version of Internet Explorer that Microsoft has ever released. IE 9 won’t run on Windows XP; it requires Windows Vista or Windows 7. Although Microsoft is not requiring Windows 7 Service Release 1 to install IE 9, it is advisable to install this Service Release before you install IE 9.

Service Packs are a fact of life for Windows users. Installing them may be a bit of a pain, but you really need them to make sure that your Windows system is secure and stable and that it performs well.

## *The Wild Side of Photography*

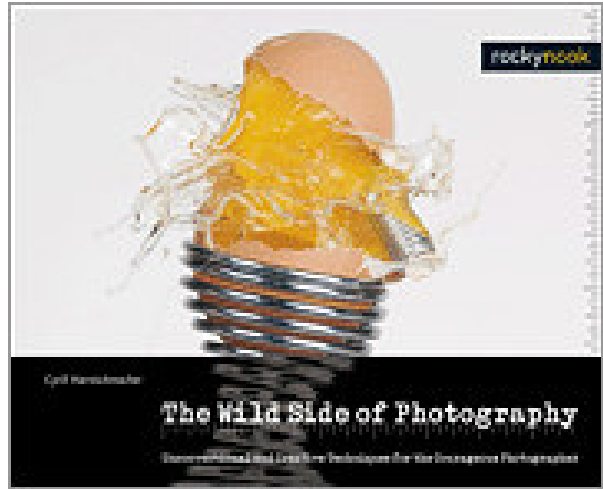
reviewed by Clara Harold

*Tucson Computer Society, AZ*

**T**his book’s twenty chapters are written by 11 different photographers. They hail from around the world and show great imagination and creativity.



1. *Landscape Blurs* – Alain Briot. Notes on process and approach. Alain talks about the equipment that he uses, picking the right scene with the right colors and the quality of light that will make a beautiful blurred photo. He writes about picking the correct lenses and processing your photo in Lightroom 2 and Photoshop CS4.
2. *Landscape Blurs, part 2*– Alain Briot. Image processing Workflow. The photos of the workflow he used in Lightroom 2 are well done. He talks about the Black Point Adjustment Curve which was very helpful in editing pictures with great results. The instructions on how to use the High Pass Filter, Smudge Tool, Shadows, Highlights and Vibrance adjustments and what they do are very good.
3. *Show Time* – Gerhard Rossbach. A mini photo studio in your notebook computer. This is a great idea that I have used and really like the results. Pick a picture to show on the screen of your laptop. Use two LED lamps that plug into a USB port. Cover the keyboard with something that has a smooth finish.  
I took pictures of flowers and jewelry. It is such a great idea.
4. *Near and Far* – Cyrill Harnischmacher. Using telephoto and macro lenses as telescopes and microscopes. Cyrill explains how to build with eye pieces, adapters, and customized lens caps and even how to adapt a compact camera into a homemade telescope. Use some old camera equipment to experiment with.
5. *Camera Obscura* – Tobias Pohl. Analog and Digital Pinhole Cameras. After sharing some of the history about the pinhole camera he gives information on how to build one as well as suggestions on how to correct some of the problems you might encounter. He suggests [www.pinhole.cz](http://www.pinhole.cz).
6. *Graffiti Made of Light* – Niklas Plessing. Light Writing with LED Lamps. Niklas writes about equipment and sources of light for getting great shots. He goes into great detail about camera settings so you can be sure to capture a good photo. There are 6 websites listed for more information on light writing and equipment.
7. *Kite Aerial Photography* – I have never flown a kite, so I don't think I will try this one. They describe the different kinds of kites, everything you will need to get started, plus a long list of websites on the subject.
8. *Selective Focus* – Cyrill Harnischmacher. Build Your Own Tilt/Shift Lens. This chapter is how to modify an old camera. The directions for all the technical work are listed. There are some pictures of some very interesting results from the makeover.
9. *Color, blur, and Verve* – Anett Boettcher. Close-up Photography Revisited. The author likes to experiment with camera lenses to keep his work intriguing; he experiments with color on the computer so the viewer will want to take a second look. There are very nice examples of his work.
10. *Diver Down* – Kai Wallasch. A look at the fascinating world of underwater photography. There is a lot of good information about equipment and how to use it. For the more practical photographer he shows how to build a periscope.
11. *Night Sights* – Michael Diechtierow. Using flash creatively in the dark. First you need a camera that is capable of long shutter speeds and high ISO settings. He goes into great



detail on using light and various flash techniques, with some great pictures as examples of his work.

12. *The Sun, the Moon, and the Stars* – Cyrill Harnischmacher. Simple ways to shoot spectacular astrophotos. He explains about using the top hat method to avoid camera shake, focusing, the right place and the right time. A list of exposure settings is provided along with f stops and how to build your own sun filter. If you are planning on taking night pictures this book would be of great benefit.
13. *Klip-Klap* – Tobias Pohl. Getting started with stereoscopic photography. Design drawings are available in the book to build your own attachment to use on your tripod. This gives you a very artsy effect.
14. *The Flatbed Camera* – Gotfried Huettemann. Taking photos with scanners. There are directions on how to get great photos of small objects without a camera. Information is given on how to set up the scanner and how to block out the light.
15. *What Do You Print On?* – Michael Benecke. Printing images on unconventional materials. He gives a lot of information about different printers and explains the many different types of paper. It is amazing the incredible variety of papers that can be found on the web. For a little fun, you can print on edible paper, apply it to a wafer and frame it!
16. *Gotcha!* – Cyrill Harnischmacher. High-Speed photography using a photoelectric shutter release. This chapter has information on how to take very high speed photos of water splashing and eggs breaking, the equipment that is needed and what settings to use.
17. *Soft-Focus Lens* – Mike Hagen. Create a Lensbaby Effect with Vaseline. To take pictures with a selective focus using what you have at home, try a little Vaseline. You can try horizontal, radial, partial, diagonal or circular smears. Use your imagination. When it's time to clean your filter, use a little rubbing alcohol on a soft rag.
18. *Little Planets* – Christian Bloch. Seriously twisted panoramas. This technique needs some special equipment. An HDRI book by the author is available at [www.hdri-handbook.com](http://www.hdri-handbook.com). You may also consider *Mastering Digital Panoramic Photography* by Harold Woeste, see the site <http://oreilly.com/catalog/9781933952451>. The photos featured in the book are outstanding.
19. *Light Changes Everything* – Martin Krolop. Using Dedicated Flash Professionally. Here's information on all types of flash units that can be used, from in-camera flash to accessory units that allow photographers to enhance their subjects anywhere. He gives advice on both indoor and outdoor shooting.
20. *A View From Above* – Mike Hagen. Aerial photography with a telescoping monopod. Want to raise your camera 20 feet into the air. Information on how to construct you own telescoping monopod is in the chapter. He gives a list of what you need and how to use it for a very low price. Use the self timer and you're in for some great pictures.
21. *Camera Hacking* – Berthold Daum. Activating hidden functionality in Canon Consumer Digicams. He explains how to bring up a lot of hidden information that is in your camera. This book will help you be more creative and take your photography to a higher level. There is something for all ages and ability levels. I recommend this for every photographer's library.

About: *The Wild Side of Photography*

Author: Various

Publisher: Rocky Nook

[www.rockynook.com](http://www.rockynook.com)

ISBN-10: 1933952512

ISBN-13: 978-1933952512

Price: \$29.95, \$19.57 @ Amazon

*From the March 2011 issue, TCS eJournal.*

## Understanding System Restore

by Vinny La Bash

*Sarasota PCUG, Inc., FL*

Windows 7 has a new and improved version of System Restore that is far superior to the lame utility that came with XP. Setting a restore point was often painfully slow, and it rarely worked as it should have. Windows 7 System Restore easily helps you bring back your computer's system files to an earlier point in time. It's a way to undo system changes to your computer without affecting your personal files, such as e-mail, documents, or photos.

Sometimes, the installation of a program or a driver can cause an unexpected change to your computer or cause Windows to behave unpredictably. Usually, uninstalling the program or driver corrects the problem. If uninstalling does not fix the problem, you can try restoring your computer's system to an earlier date when everything worked correctly.

System Restore uses a feature called System Protection to regularly create and save restore points on your computer. These restore points contain information about registry settings and other system information that Windows uses. You can also create restore points manually.

System Restore is not intended for backing up personal files, so it cannot help you recover a photograph or video that has been deleted or damaged. You should regularly back up your personal files and important data using a backup program. Windows 7 has an excellent built-in backup utility.

Windows 7 uses the Shadow Copy feature, introduced in Vista. It's vastly superior to the process in XP and earlier versions of Windows. The old way used a simple file filter and copied files around the system which was clumsy compared to the Shadow Copy method. Today, Windows creates a snapshot of your drive which can later be used to restore your system should catastrophe occur.

Additional capabilities of Shadow copy include taking snapshots of files even when currently in use. Microsoft has incorporated this feature into Previous Versions which allows restoring a previous version of an application. Unfortunately, this power is available only in Windows Professional or Ultimate.

The easiest way to bring up System Restore is to type System in the Start menu search box and select it from the resulting list. Another way is to select the Recovery option from Control Panel, or you can simply type **rstrui** in the search box.

Whatever method you choose will bring up the System Restore dialog box that gives you some helpful information. Select the Next button to get a list of restore points. Most of the time you will be using the most recent restore point to get your system working again.

Focus your attention on the Description list. This can give you an important indication of what went wrong. Did your problem begin after installing a Critical Update, a backup operation, or a new freeware program that you couldn't resist?

When you apply System Restore the system creates another restore point so you can undo the change if your problem isn't fixed. You can't undo System Restore however, if you use it in safe mode. But you can run System Restore again and select a different restore point.

Restore points are saved until the disk space Windows allocates to the utility is used up. Then the oldest restore points are deleted as new ones are needed. The easiest way to delete

all previous restore points is to turn System Restore off, and then turn it back on again. Don't worry about running out of space.

Many computer problems can be traced to sloppy programs written by people who don't know enough about proper programming techniques to get their utilities published by reliable vendors. It's surprising how many problems are generated by faulty uninstall tools. There are many sound freeware offerings out in cyberspace, but don't use them unless they come tested and approved by a trusted source like Smart Computing.

*From the March 2011 issue, Sarasota PC Monitor*



## Perturbed by Passwords

Q. When filling out online log-ins and some forms, why do I have to type in my email address and password twice? It's not hard to do, but it's a pain in the neck. Is there a reason for that?

A. Yes, there is. Its primary purpose is, of course, to ruin your day, and secondarily, to make sure whatever you enter is correct. There is always a chance that a finger can slip when typing something the first time resulting in an inadvertent typo. Typing it twice virtually eliminates that possibility.

Because we're required to remember so many usernames and passwords, while most browsers remember them, it's a good idea to keep a copy in a secure location in case you ever need to manually enter them. In the alternative, you can use a password manager such as Roboform ([www.roboform.com](http://www.roboform.com)).

I keep passwords in a document file that I renamed something only I know, changing the file extension in the process, and moving the file to an undisclosed location on an external drive. I also send the file to one of my Gmail accounts as an attachment, so it's safe and secure in a remote location, out of harm's way, yet I can access it at any time.

Q. I recently started using Gmail, thanks to your recommendation. I like it a lot, but what I can't figure out is how to email something I copied from Excel. When I paste a portion of my spreadsheet into the body of my Gmail message, it loses its formatting. How can I avoid that?

A. I recommend sending data as an attachment rather than placing it within the body of an email to avoid formatting issues such as you describe. The process of attaching a file involves little more than clicking the ATTACH button and selecting a file, so it's not a particularly arduous activity.

If your recipient has a large font selected as the default, for example, or is using a text-based format and your Excel data is inserted in the body of a message, all native formatting (within Excel) will be removed. But if you send it as an attachment, when the recipient opens your Excel or Word document, he or she will see it within their own Excel, Word or other compatible application, and it will appear exactly as you sent it. As senders, we cannot control what others see when we paste anything into the body of a message.

Having said that, to send Excel snippets (ExSnips?) within a Gmail message, send it as Rich Formatting, not Plain Text. Directly above where you enter your message in the Compose window of Gmail, you will see "Rich Formatting" that you can click to enable. Then copy and paste the Excel data into your message and it should be fine. If not, think "attachment."

Q. I received an alert advising that I needed to update my Adobe Flash Player if I was using an older version. I don't know how to locate the Adobe Flash Player to check which version I have. I am feeling very dumb again. Thanks for being there, Mr. M.

A. A very easy way to determine the version is to simply play a YouTube ([www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com)) video. Right-click the video when it's playing and it will display the version of the Flash player being used.

## Mr. Modem's DME (Don't Miss 'Em) Sites of the Month

### Congoo News

A comprehensive news source that aggregates stories from more than 25,000 free and subscription-based publications and Web sites. All news stories are sourced and time-stamped so you know how current each item is. Click U.S. or World and select your city or country, then drill down to news and information of interest to you.

[www.congoo.com](http://www.congoo.com)

### Drug Digest

A non-commercial, consumer-information resource you can use to check drug interactions within a database that contains more than 5,000 drugs, vitamins and herbals, and 11,500 potential interactions. Visit the Drug Library to compare drugs, to view top performers, and side effects. You can search by health condition or drug name, plus review symptoms, treatments and risk factors. This site subscribes to the HON (Health on the Net) Code (<http://healthonnet.org>), which assures reliable information.

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

### Price Protectr

This watchdog site's purpose is to make sure you get the best online deal possible. If you purchase items from any Price Protectr (yes, that's the correct spellg) supported retailers, enter the URL of the item you purchased. If a drop in price occurs within the item's "price protection" period, you will receive an email with instructions how to obtain the price differential as a refund. The site supports more than 160 retailers, including Amazon, Apple, Best Buy, Costco, Sears and Staples. Be sure to read the FAQ ([www.priceprotectr.com/faq.jsp](http://www.priceprotectr.com/faq.jsp)) before diving in.

[www.priceprotectr.com](http://www.priceprotectr.com)

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## The Seventh Son of Windows

### Desktop Gadgets

by Lee Reynolds

*Boca Raton Computer Society, FL*

### Introduction

Windows Vista introduced a new feature called the Sidebar, which was a narrow section of your Desktop where you could have small applications running called Gadgets. These Gadgets could be moved out of the Sidebar and anchored somewhere else on your Desktop, if you wished, but still the Sidebar application had to be running.

In Windows 7, there is no longer any Sidebar, but Desktop Gadgets are still present, and you set them up in a new Control Panel applet of the same name. (In Windows Vista, the

Sidebar was on by default, whereas in Windows 7 there is no Sidebar and any Gadgets you want must be configured in Control Panel.)

## Windows 7 Gadgets

The Gadgets present in Windows 7 are the same as those provided by Vista, with an additional one that is connected to Windows Media Center. These Gadgets are mini-applications designed to use web technology so as to provide real-time access to information of one type or another available through the internet. The built-in Gadgets are these:



- a Calendar application which shows the month, day, year, and day of week. If you click it, you will see the entire month
- a Clock which can be configured to show one of 8 different clock faces and any time zone
- a CPU meter which shows two analog style dials measuring current memory usage and CPU utilization
- a Currency converter
- a Headline Feed of RSS feeds that you are subscribed to via Internet Explorer
- a Media Center gadget that shows a revolving set of links to various parts of Windows Media Center
- a Weather gadget which can be configured for any location in the world
- a Stocks gadget for tracking stocks
- a Picture Puzzle where you slide tiles around against a timer
- a Slide Show gadget for showing the photos you configure for it

## Other Gadgets

There are many other Gadgets that can be downloaded from the internet and installed, if you so desire...

## Windows 7 Gadget Options

If you click on the Show Desktop area of the Taskbar in Windows 7 (a narrow rectangular area on the extreme right end), then you will see the Desktop with its Gadgets (if any.) In Windows Vista, when you clicked on the Show Desktop icon of the Quick Launch Bar, the Gadgets were not visible.

Gadgets can be shown on your Desktop in Windows 7 even if you are not on line with an internet connection, but they will in this case feature a time stamp which shows how out of date the associated data is. Some of the Gadgets, e.g., the Calendar, can be toggled between various sizes. Some of them have Touch capabilities for those users who have a touch screen attached to their PC.

*From the April 2011 issue, Boca Bits.*

## Cloud Computing

by Dick Maybach

**A**lthough you can hardly pick up a computer publication without being assaulted by references to *cloud computing*, the term has been abducted by marketing organizations to the extent that it means almost nothing. Today, “cloud” is to computing as “natural” is to food. Although the term means little, the concept is very valuable, and is something that



most computer owners use every day. I define cloud computing as using storage or processing resources on the Internet.

Most of us already use cloud computing far more than we realize; for example, every e-mail we receive sits on our ISP's disk until we download it to our PCs, and when we use Google Maps, much the processing and all of the storage occurs on Google's hardware. In the extreme, cloud computing could evolve to the point where our computer would consist of only a keyboard, mouse, display, and perhaps a printer, with just enough processing power and software to support a Web browser.



Google foresaw this as the future of home computing and began developing their Chrome operating system to support it.

A simple example of cloud computing is a backup service, which continually backs up all your data whenever you are connected to the Internet. You don't have to think about it, and because your backups are stored at a different location, they are safe even in case of a local catastrophe. A similar use is synchronizing data among several computers, where the data might be files, contacts, and your favorite Web sites and (with care) their passwords. Many people also use the cloud to share information with others, for example by using Facebook for personal information, Flickr for photos, or Google Docs for documents. Cloud storage is both convenient and inexpensive; indeed, many vendors offer up to two gigabytes free.

All the above examples are data storage ones, but there are also cloud processing services, such as Google Docs. Google Docs supports the common office tasks such as word processing, spreadsheets, and presentations, which means you can perform these without purchasing an office suite and having to keep it updated. It also allows on-line collaboration (where, for example, several people edit the same document), although few home users are likely to need this feature. Like cloud storage, cloud processing is inexpensive or even free.

By now, you may be thinking, "What's the Catch?" Somebody has to pay for these services, as providing them requires non-trivial costs for computer hardware, support staff, and communications. In some cases, the free service is a limited sample to entice you to purchase a more versatile one. In others, *you* are the product being sold. Your habits and preferences are valuable commodities that advertisers will pay to learn about. For many of us this is a fair trade; in return for the convenience of Google's search engine, we tolerate the ads in the sidebar and being directed to sites that want to sell to us.

However, there are some security and safety caveats involved. Security is complex for a cloud vendor; your data are stored on the same disks, the same memory, and pass through the same processors as everybody else's. The process is much like what happens in a commercial laundry or dry cleaner, where everybody's clothes are tagged and thrown together into a large machine. Afterwards, somebody looks at the tags to get them back to their proper owners. Contrast this to a bank deposit vault, where only your key can open the box where you place your documents. Even at such competent vendors as Google, there have been instances of data leaking from one customer to another, and many cloud vendors are start-ups who have much less expertise than Google. This means that you should take responsibility for safeguarding your data. For example, if you back up your disk in the cloud, encrypt any files (such as those containing passwords or on-line banking data) that present security risks. I store my



passwords using KeePassX, <http://www.keepassx.org/>. Its file is always encrypted on your PC's disk, and you can safely back it up anywhere. I also use Gnu Privacy Guard (gpg), <http://www.gnupg.org/>, to encrypt files and e-mail. (Both of these programs are available for the Windows, Mac, and Linux platforms.) By the way, when you encrypt a file, be sure that only the encrypted version is ever placed in a directory that is backed up in the cloud.

Safety also is not trivial. Vendors do go out of business and, even if they keep operating, they may find that providing cloud services isn't profitable. Not all of them back up their storage, which means that their hardware failures and software bugs can destroy your data. If you use the service for back-up or synchronization, this isn't a problem because the chances of simultaneous failures in the cloud and on your PC is negligible. However, if you store your only copy of your photograph or music collection in the cloud, you are risking disaster. In the case of cloud processing, you should also be concerned about the format in which your data is stored. It does little good to download the file containing your novel if it's stored in a format that only the (now out of business cloud vendor) could read.

Finally, cloud computing is new, so you should expect some glitches.

## Don't Panic!

by Berry F. Phillips

*Computer Club of Oklahoma City*

I can almost imagine if Sherlock Holmes, my favorite fictional detective, had a computer in Victorian England, and he detected evil on his system what he would think. He would suspect a diabolical hacking by Dr. Moriarty. He would not panic but say calmly to Dr. Watson, "the game is afoot." Troubleshooting your computer is just like playing detective. There are certain steps that you can take before calling a computer tech and facing another horror story, the repair bill!

Panic control is to develop an objective detached mind of Sherlock Holmes as you begin your investigation of the evil in your computer. Sometimes breathing deeply helps. Sometimes getting up and doing something else and coming back to the problem helps. I find that often sleeping and coming back to the problem helps. Avoid getting too emotional and taking a hammer or some other weapon to attack your system remembering they computers expensive, and you do have lots of data on your system. Here are some basic instructions:

1. Restart your computer. Often software problems will correct themselves when you do that.
2. Check to make sure everything is working. If not check the connection to what is not working.
3. Check the electric power by plugging a lamp into the same power outlet that is connected to your computer to make sure the outlet is working.
4. Make sure the computer and monitor are plugged in.
5. Disconnect peripheral devices and restart the computer.
6. Listen for unusual sounds. Is the cooling fan running? Is the hard drive making noises?
7. Look inside the computer for wires that aren't plugged in all the way or other faulty connections
8. Start the computer from an external start-up disk, such as the system software CD that hopefully came with your computer.

Having said all that, I must confess that I have tried to save a buck being quite frugal and very Scottish only to make my problem even worse and of course more expensive for a tech (pro) to repair. If you do decide to call technical support, write down the exact problem and what you were doing when it occurred. Also note any error messages. Try to replicate the

problem if you can. Be as specific as possible when talking to the support person. Computers can crash or hang when their hard disk become too full.

Free up space by deleting unnecessary files and emptying the Trash or Recycle Bin.

Don't shock yourself or your RAM. When working inside the computer, turn the power off but leave the electrical cord plugged into the surge suppressor. Ground yourself by touching the casing of the power supply before touching any of the computer circuits. You can also wear a grounding strap which is very inexpensive. Every computer user should have a small computer tool kit.

I do not recommend the medical option of taking of panic pills for computer ills. I do recommend joining the Computer Club of Oklahoma City where we share with each other our positive as well a negative computer experiences. Knowledge is the real cure for panic in computing.

The motto of our computer club for years is: "The only stupid question is the one not asked!"

I wonder if I can get Sherlock Holmes as a guest speaker for the computer club. Do you think I may have become a bit eccentric as a fan of the world's greatest detective? Where did I leave my smoking jacket and calabash pipe? I will have to ask Dr. Watson or Mrs. Hudson!

*From the April 2011 issue, eMonitor.*

## Society News

May 10, 2011

### Help's Half Hour

by Jan Rothfuss

**Q:** A member is trying to use DSL Frontier and is considering a hotspot license. It will allow up to four computers to use the network connection. They have some experience with a key that they had used in the past. They will also be able to take it with them when they travel south for 3-4 months. It does need to be charged a couple of times a week. Does anyone have any experience with a hotspot license?

**A:** It seems that it will be the same as a router service. Not sure about the need to charge it.

## The Lighter Side

While I grant that this may look like a representation of the old joke about the joke competition that consisted of competitors yelling out numbers but I guarantee it's worth your effort to look these up.

<http://xkcd.com/272/>

<http://xkcd.com/728/>