TOGGLE

THE MICROCOMPUTER TURN (ON)

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER FOR TACOMA-SEATTLE AREA MICROCOMPUTER USERS

Volume 35 Number 4 September 2013 Issue #364

IN THIS ISSUE

UPDATE

Hail and Farewell

Your editor reminisces and remembers those who have held posts in and contributed to the user group over the years.

Word Processing

In *Inserting International Letters into Word Documents* the author discusses inserting international characters into text documents.

Communications

In *Internet Alerts Can Keep You Informe*d Sandy Berger tells you how to use the Internet to keep tabs on areas or subject matter that interests you

In *Save Money on Telephone Calls* the author talks about VOIP again.

In *Microsoft Windows Telephone Scam - BEWARE!!* the author makes us aware of a current scam going on and how to check your computer system.

General Interest

In *Why Do I Care?* the author does a quick run-through of what hardware you have, what it does and what happens when you put it to use.

Operating System

In *Windows 8: Big Differences from Win7, and It Works!* the author discusses some of the differences between Windows 8 and earlier versions (which most of us are still using -by the way).

Hardware

In *Search for a New Printer* the author goes into quite a lot of detail when discussing what your requirements might be when deciding on the pruchase of a new printer.

Newsletter Sources

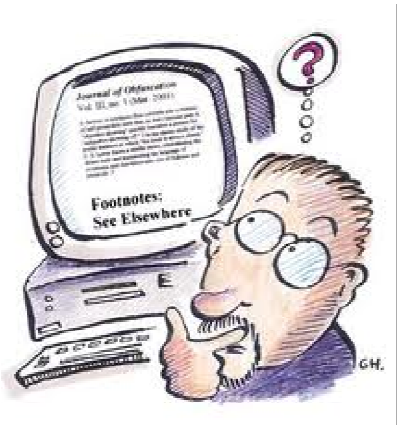
For those of you who wish to visit the website where your editor got most of his newsletter content here is Wally Nallawalla's Site address for User Group Website addresses:

http://easyrsvp.com/ugotw/

Question for TOG Members Concening Mailing Address

The TOG mailing list will be made available to TAPCUG upon dissolution of Tacoma Open Group for Microcomputers, so that you can be advised of any future meetings, etc.

Question: Do you as a member have any objection to other TOG members having access to your mailing address at or subsequent to the September 2013 meeting.



GOODBYE

Hail and Farewell

by Bob Thomson, Editor

From Wikipedia

Hail and Farewell (a translation of ''ave atque vale,'' last words of the poem Catullus 101) is a traditional military event whereby those coming to and departing from an organization are celebrated. This may coincide with a change in command, be scheduled on an annual basis, or be prompted by any momentous organizational change. It is a time to honor those who have departed the unit and thank them for their service. .....

I want to take this opportunity to do just that: thanking those of you who have supported the Tacoma Open Group for Microcomputers (originally Tacoma Osborne Group) over the 31 years of existence. Also thanks are due to those faithful members who have supported the group during that time. We have come a long way from the pioneering ''portable'' (some said ''luggable'') computer, the Osborne 1 through the many IBM clones, the print wheel and dot matrix printers, fanfold paper, 300 Baud modems with adapters that accepted the handheld telephone receiver to those that plugged into the serial port and made the great leap to 1200 or even 2400 Baud.

Officers of The User Group

I also want to mention the names of those individuals who selflessly gave of their time and effort to make our group work over the years. I have gone back through past issues of the newsletter to find them. Some names, I must confess, I had forgotten. If I have omitted anyone, I apologize.

President
Klaus Hagel
Bob Thomson
Kate Jamerson
Otto Dobias -89
Ray Mills
Hugh Farmer
E. White Smith
Marv Eidinger
David Rowe
Carl Tenning

Vice president and Prog Chairmen
Kate Jamerson
Harold Rasmussen
E. White Smith
Marv Eidinger
David Rowe
Gary Miller
Carl Tenning
Dave Barclay

Disk Librarians
Ray Mills - CP/M & DOS
D. Scott Young - CP/M
Wayne Hartman CP/M
Jim Van Sickler - CP/M
Grant Griffin - DOS
Michael Fix - DOS
Jim Cooke - CP/M & DOS
Carl Tenning - DOS & Windows
Tom Stepanek - Windows

Secretary/Treasurer
Lorraine Stargel
Ray & Carolyn Hardee (Olympia)
Jim Enright
Jim Cooke
Bob Henkel

Newsletter/Sysop
Klaus Hagel
Bob Thomson

S. King County Contact
Carl Tenning

WebMaster
Ray Mills
Carl Tenning

Our Hardware

When we first started the Tacoma Osborne Group in June of 1982, since we were all owners of a ''portable'' computer, many of us brought our computers to the monthly meetings and would try to load software examples of what the meeting was about, in much the same way that we bring laptops to today's meetings. The idea was that we could use our own machines to follow what the presenter of the month was trying to show us.

I remember Jim Enright bringing (lugging) a 24 inch Black and White TV Monitor to the Parkland Library basement meeting room. It was a discarded monitor that had previously been used to show flight schedules at SEATAC Airport. It must have weighed well over 100 pounds and you could still see traces of the airline schedule displays burned into the screen when it was turned off. But when it was used to display our programs it worked just fine. It was hooked up to an Osborne 1 computer and replicated the computer screen to illustrate to we attending members what the presenter was telling us about, as he or she manipulated their own Osborne 1 computer.

A lot has changed over the years. We acquired a ViewGraph projector for the display of slides, then an active tablet that hooked to a computer which has since been donated to chartity. (We still have the ViewGraph projector) This was long before the Internet and modern projectors that plugged into a computer port. We still have that projector and will be giiving that to TAPCUG.

The Newsletter

Klaus Hagel and Lorraine Stargel produced the newsletter for the first year from June 1982 through May 1983. It was called Pierce County/South Puget Sound Osborne Computer Users Club. The name of the computer group was changed to Tacoma Osborne Group at the February 1983 meeting. I took over as president and editor in June 1983 and renamed the newsletter the TOGGLE and have edited it ever since.

TOGGLE Bulletin Board and Internet Website

Our early ''Internet'' was a Bulletin Board that was accessed by telephone. We were affiliated loosely with the First Osborne Group (FOG) in the San Francisco area. Our group's Bulletin Board was an Osborne 1 computer hooked up to a separate telephone line in my basement. We carried portions of the FOG disk library on one of the Osborne's two floppy disk drives and could put up any specific piece of library software requested by members for download. The TOGGLE BBS operated throughout the 1980's and 1990's.

Ray Mills put up the TOGGLE.ORG websiteon the Internet in July 1999. The newsletter and club information has been displayed there ever since.

WORD PROCESSING NOTES & TIPS

Inserting International Letters into Word Documents

by Nancy DeMarte, Columnist, Office Talk,
Sarasota PCUG, Inc., Florida
Newsletter: Sarasota PC Monitor (www.spcug.org)
ndemarte (at) Verizon.net

In our global society, languages have become more blended. English, for example, has adopted many words of different origins, some of which include special diacritical marks over the letters, as in the French word passi. Occasionally words can actually be misunderstood without a special mark over a letter, such as the difference between the ''risumi'' we provide when looking for a job, and ''resume'', meaning to begin again. It helps to know how to insert these diacritical marks when using Microsoft Office. Word provides two fairly easy methods to add these marks: the Symbol dialog box and keystroke combinations.

The Symbol dialog box (formerly called the Character Map) is easy to find in Word. It can be useful but also a bit tedious when you're in the middle of composing a document. It provides both international characters and other symbols, such as the Euro symbol () or Pi (p). To use this dialog box in Word 2007, click the Insert tab, then Symbol to view a few common symbols. Click the one you want to make it appear where your cursor was flashing. Click Symbol, then More Symbols, to open the full dialog box. Click a letter or symbol, then Insert, and it's done. This dialog box contains every symbol and international letter that Office has to offer, but inserting one may involve moving between different tables of fonts and symbol types before you locate the one you need. It is worth spending a few minutes exploring this box, though, if only to see what's available. Once you insert a symbol using the dialog box, it will appear with recently used characters and symbols in a row near the bottom of the box for easy access in the future.

Although the Symbol dialog box method is the best way to insert a symbol, there's an easier method of inserting international letters using a combination of keyboard strokes. This method involves pressing the Control key (Ctrl) on the keyboard at the same time as a punctuation or symbol key, then releasing these keys and pressing the key of the letter that needs the diacritical mark. Let's use the example of the acute i. First be sure your cursor is flashing in the spot where you want the character to appear. Press the Ctrl key and the apostrophe key at the same time. Release them and type the letter ''e'', which will appear with its acute mark in place, i.

When learning this method, it helps to have a chart of the appropriate keys and corresponding diacritical marks nearby. The system is so logical that before long you won't need to refer to the chart except for unusual marks. The chart on the right gives you many of the ones you might need.

A few tips about this chart: 1. Many of the diacritical marks resemble the keyboard symbols that are used to create them, which makes them easier to remember. 2. Occasionally the Shift key is included in the procedure. This is because the keyboard symbol is the top one on the key and needs the Shift key to select it, as it would if it were a capital letter. 3. To get the upper case version of these letters with their marks, such as I, merely press the Shift key while pressing the letter.

International Character	Press these keys, then release and press the letter.
à, è, ì, ò, ù	Ctrl + ` (grave accent key)
á, é, í, ó, ú, ý	Ctrl + ' (apostrophe key)
â, ê, î, ô, û	Ctrl + Shift + ^ (caret key)
ã, ñ, õ	Ctrl + Shift + ~ (tilde key)
ä, ë, ï, ö, ü, ÿ	Ctrl + Shift + : (colon key)
å	Crtl + Shift + @
æ or œ	Crtl + Shift + &
ç	Crtl + , (comma key)
ð	Crtl + ' (apostrophe key)
ø	Ctrl + / (forward slash key)
¿	Alt + Ctrl + Shift +?
¡	Alt + Ctrl + Shift +!
ß	Ctrl + Shift + &

If you find that you type in languages other than English on a regular basis, Word 2007 and 2010 offer quite a bit of help. You can see the list of the languages which have editing tools installed in Word by clicking the Office button (File in 2010) and selecting Word Options. Click Popular in the left pane and select the Language Settings button. I found, for example, that limited editing support is provided for more than 200 languages on my computer, including six dialects of French, five of Chinese, and twenty-one of Spanish.

If you need more tools in another language, you can download free Language Interface Packs or purchase Language Packs for about $25, both of which provide extra editing tools for the language of your choice. Other options allow you to change the keyboard to a different language layout. To do this, open the Control Panel and put it in Classic view so all the icons are visible. Click the Region and Language icon, and then the Keyboards and Languages tab. English is the default,

but you can add other languages from this dialog box. You can also customize formats for specific systems which differ among countries, such as currency and measurement, using the Format tab in that same dialog box.

If you are interested in exploring more about using Word in a language other than English, here is a link to get you started: http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/support/change-thedefault-language-for-office-programs-HA010356057.aspx

Meantime, clip the chart included in this article to use the next time you need to type an ''international'' word.

This article has been obtained with permission to reprint by non-profit or other user groups, with credit given to the author and the user group.

COMMUNICATIONS NOTES & TIPS

Internet Alerts Can Keep You Informed

by Sandy Berger, www.compukiss.com sandy (at) compukiss.com

How would you like to know every time your name is mentioned on the Web? Or when there is a break-through on a disease that you are following? Or when your favorite actor is starting in a new movie? This is all possible with automated Internet alerts. Read this to see how it works.

Internet alerts are available by many different Internet services. The Weather channel at www.weather.com has free alerts that will give you daily weather alerts as well as alerts for allergens like pollen and also alerts for severe weather. Other alerts will keep you informed of the weather on school days and give warnings for snow and rain. You can apply several customization options such as the time of the alert and the severity that triggers the alert. You can get alerts sent by e-mail and/or text to a cell phone.

Many news stations also have alerts regarding news, sports, and weather. One of my local North Carolina stations, WRAL (www.wral.com) even has an app that uses GPS to alert you to severe weather no matter where you travel as long as you have your cell phone turned on. While most other alerts are free, WRAL charges $8 a year for their GPS-based alerts. Check your local news stations for news alerts.

The granddaddy of all alerts, Google Alerts, is a very useful one that you should be aware of. This is one of Google's powerful tools that is completely free. You can use Google Alerts to keep track of anything on the Web. Just surf over to http://www.google.com/alertshttp://www.google.com/alerts and enter a search query. Then choose your options. You can control how often you get alerts (as it happens, once a day or once a week), the type of Web coverage that triggers an alert (news, blogs, video, discussions, books, or all of these), and you can also choose only the best results or all results. Enter your e-mail address and your alerts will start. You can change or remove an alert at any time. Once you start using Google Alerts, you will be sur-prised at the results.

Most people start with creating an alert with their own name. My ''Sandy Berger'' alert tells me when any news article or blog mentions my name. Of course, it also gives me results for the other Sandy Berger. You know -- that guy from the Clinton administration who stuffed documents from the National Archives into his pants. Un-less you have a very unusual name, you can expect to get news of others with the same name. That's not all bad. In fact, it can be very interesting.

The Google Alerts can be wonderful if you are following the news about a certain item. For instance, they are wonderful if you are interested in following a certain disease, medical condition or treatment. You can use Google Alerts to follow any current event or any specific public figure, actor, or personality.

If you are a transplant and want to follow the news from your old hometown, this is a perfect way to do it. Just enter the name of your old city and state in the search terms. If you want to be more specific, you can just en-ter the zip code. This will give you results directly from your old neighborhood.

When you set up a Google Alert, you may want to limit the results to just the best results and once a day. If you let Google give you all the results as they happen, I can assure you that you will be inundated with email.

You are sure to find many different ways to use Google Alerts. In fact, it is good to play with the Alerts a little to get to just want you want. Like any Google search, you can enter as many search terms as you like to nar-row the results. You can put names in quotes to get exact matches.

Be creative with your alerts. You can have Google search for coupons for your favorite restaurant. You can use it to follow a company whose stock you may be interested in purchasing. You can use it to follow an item that you want to purchase.

Save Money on Telephone Calls

Sandy Berger, CompuKISS (www.compukiss.com) sandy (at) compukiss.com

Many of us remember when we all paid a monthly fee to the telephone company for our landline and paid exorbitant rates for long distance service. If you had friends or relatives living far away, those monthly bills could really add up. You may even remember that when a call from afar would come in, the person who answered the phone would promptly announce

that the call was ''long distance'' and the recipient of the call would rush over to the phone so the connection time would be kept as short as possible.

Thankfully, all of that is in the past. Technology has brought us many ways to keep in touch with friends, family, and business associates around the world quite inexpensively.

There are actually two different technologies that have greatly impacted our telephone-type communications. First is the emergence of cell phones. Today most of us are using cell phones for everyday communications. Since cell phones work on ''minutes'' rather than distance, you can basically call anywhere is the US more economically than you can with the old ''long distance'' service that the telephone companies provide. Each cell phone company offers somewhat unique features, but all are money-savers. For instance, some carriers allow you to call anyone else on that carrier at no charge. Some have special evening and weekend rates. Some allow you to list up to ten telephone numbers that you can call at any time with no charge.

Cell phone charges are generally much more expensive when you want to call overseas, but there is a great technological solution for that too. It is the second technology that has greatly impacted telephone-type communications. It is called VoIP, which stands for Voice Over Internet Protocol. VoIP uses the Internet to make telephone calls. Most of the major telephone and cable companies now offer some sort of ''Internet'' calling packages. Other companies like Vonage and Net2Phone have made a splash in this industry.

VoIP allows you to use your broadband Internet connection to make phone calls. VoIP service through a major carrier often offers additional features that you not generally offered through a regular telephone service plan. With a VoIP plan from a telephone or cable company you can often get voicemail, call forwarding, caller ID, and 3-way conference calling at no extra cost. Some VoIP providers also offer online account management, online voice mail, detailed call logging, and callforwarding.

You can also use VoIP with any ''telephone-type'' company involved. You simply use your computer to make calls. Skype is one of the most popular services of this type. And the price is right. Making Skype calls from computer to computer is totally free. If you hook up two computers that have webcams, you can make video calls where you can see and talk with someone at the same time. You can also call from your computer to landlines and mobile numbers in the US and Canada for $2.99 a month. If you don't want to be tied to the computer, you can purchase a Skype telephone that uses your computer to call, while you talk on a traditional-type telephone handset. You can also access Skype from many mobile phones. This lets you to place calls without adding to your minutes. There are many Skype competitors like GoogleTalk, Yahoo Messenger, and iCall.

There are also other unique VoIP solutions. You may have seen magicJack advertised on late night TV. It is a small device that plugs into the USB port on your computer. With magicJack you get your own telephone number. You can make calls right from the computer screen or you can attach a regular telephone to the device and use it to make free phone calls in the US and Canada. I have a set of wireless phones attached to the magicJack that allows me to make and receive calls anywhere in the house. If a friend or relative also has a magicJack, you can make free calls to them even if they are one the other side of the world. magicJack costs about $40 for the device and first year of service and $20 a year for service after that. It's pretty useful and inexpensive.

By the way, if you have a land-line telephone number that you want to keep, you can move it (port it) over to a mobile phone. magicJack says that starting this August you will also be able to use your old telephone number with the magicJack, as well. So you don't even have to give up your old number to use the new technologies.

Whether you use a cell phone or a VoIP solution, you should realize that VoIP call may not be perfect. Cell phones sometimes drop calls and have areas where you can get service. Services like magicJack and Skype are dependent on your broadband Internet connection. So if you connection speed is good, the call will be excellent, but if your Internet slows down, you may get a poorer call quality. Yet, both of these solutions will save you money and you may find, like me that occasional slight inconvenience is worth the cost savings. I gave up both my business and personal land line almost two years ago. I now rely on my cell phones, Skype, and magicJack. I am saving a bundle and enjoying every minute.

Microsoft Windows Telephone Scam - BEWARE!!

(From the Association of Personal Computer User Groups - www.apcug.net)

This really happened to a user group member in California.

One of our members (I'll save him embarrassment by calling him ''Jim'') has just been the victim of a phone scam involving Microsoft. Not the ''real'' Microsoft.

Fearing viruses on his computer, Jim allowed the ''Microsoft tech support'' man on the phone to enter his computer electronically to check. The caller ''found'' red flags next to items on the computer that indicated viruses and offered to fix the computer -- for a charge. Jim felt uncomfortable with this and said no. The ''Microsoft'' scammer said he would block the use of the computer if he was not paid. Jim hung up.

Unhappily, Jim discovered afterward that the scammer had indeed done something while connected to the computer so that Jim could not use it or the internet. Luckily, there was no financial or other sensitive information on the computer that could also have been taken by the scammer. If it had, that would have been another story. A very sad story. However, not so luckily, Jim will not be able to use his computer again for a couple of days until it has been reformatted and all the programs reinstalled.

So, fellow members, this is an updated warning. It CAN happen to you. Jim wants you to know about and to learn from his awful experience. Here is a link at Microsoft that describes various scams using its name: ***http://www.microsoft.com/security/onlineprivacy/msname.aspx***

From the Windows Secrets newsletter < ***http://windowssecrets.com/***>:

- Everybody's Event Viewer has red and yellow flags. Check yours right now and you'll see them:

- Windows XP: Click Start, Control Panel, Performance and Maintenance, Administrative Tools; then double-click Computer Management.

- Vista: Do the same, except for the final step. Double-click Event Viewer instead.

- Win7: Click Start, type Event, click Event Viewer.

''On the left of the Event Viewer window, expand the Windows Logs/System branch. See the ocean of colored flags? They're mostly harmless, although they look alarming - which is why Windows makes it difficult to find them. It's good fodder for a flimflam.''

Links to Microsoft Telephone Scam articles and/or information:

Microsoft Security & Safety Center: ***<http://bit.ly/jxOzal>***

Microsoft Answers - Virus and Malware: ***<http://bit.ly/P4w9j2>***

InformationWeek Security:
<http://bit.ly/Rp7oAIabc15.com: http://bit.ly/RbOedZ>

Note from Judy: I've been on the phone with Jim Evans, APCUG Director, when he's been called by one of these scam people. He's using Skype with me so I was able to hear what the person was saying on his regular phone plus Jim's responses. This has happened twice within the last six weeks or so. The last time, he was really leading the caller on but was having trouble understanding what he was saying.

Conclusion, you'd think the scammers would have a better grasp of the English language before they call. The Microsoft telephone-based scams have been around since 2008.

GENERAL INTEREST

Why Do I Care?

Wil Wakely, President, Seniors Computer Group, CA
Newsletter: Bits and Bytes (www.scgsd.org) Wilw31 (at) gmail.com

This article might be a bit ''techy'' for some of us, but it is important to know a bit about what goes on inside of our computer so when something bad happens, we have a clue as to what might be wrong, and we can save time and money by not having to hire a high-priced technician to fix a simple problem.

First, let's review the hardware. The power supply converts the house electricity, 110 Volts AC (alternating current), to the appropriate lower DC (direct current) voltages that the rest of the computer requires. It contains a fan to keep it cool, which is about the only noise you should hear. There is one large printed circuit board inside called the ''motherboard'', because it contains connections, or ''slots'', where other smaller ''daughter boards'' can be installed that do specialized functions. The motherboard is essentially the ''head'' of the computer and contains the major memory and connections for all of the other components. It has connectors for the keyboard, mouse, hard drives, modem, video, sound, fan and USB devices. It also contains the CPU, Central Processing Unit, a large computer chip which is the genius that runs everything. The latest versions of the CPU can do over three billion calculations per second, so it is really loafing most of the time. It is truly multitasking which means that it can do a variety of things at the same time.

So here's what happens when you first turn on your computer and it ''boots''. Booting comes from ''bootstrapping'', or lifting oneself by his bootstraps. The computer needs to know some rudimentary facts about itself before it can come fully alive. This information is retained in a computer chip on the motherboard called a ROM (Read-only Memory), which permanently retains certain information without requiring any power. There is a small disktype battery on the motherboard which allows this ROM to be read.

This battery also keeps the clock running while the computer is off, so if the clock time begins acting strangely, the battery may need to be replaced; however, it is usually good for years. This ROM contains the BIOS (bye-ose) which stands for Basic Input Output System, and instructs the computer where to find more information in order to fully start up. A process called POST (Power On Self Test) runs to test the memory and make sure the rest of the computer is healthy. It gives a series of Beep Codes to indicate the state of health. One beep means everything is okay. A Google search of Beep Codes will tell you what's wrong if you get weird beeps while

Booting. If you press the Del(ete) key immediately after pressing the start switch, a screen will show the BIOS settings, which can be modified if necessary. Be careful!

Hard drives are so important to the computer that it helps to understand how they work: Think of them like the old Jukeboxes lots of LP records that each can be played with a movable tone arm. The hard drive has hard metal platters, unlike old floppy disks which were flexible. They contain tiny magnetic spots which, depending upon how they are magnetized, indicate a one or a zero, which is the binary language the computer understands. A movable ''head'', like the tone arm, ''reads'' the magnetic state of the spots, called magnetic domains, and ''writes'' to change the magnetic polarity. Rather than a spiral track like an LP, the hard drive has ever larger concentric circles called cylinder tracks. The platter is also divided up into sectors like pieces of a pie. So to find a file, the head moves to a specific cylinder track and sector and reads the data that is there. A large table of contents called a Partition Table contains the track/sector location of all the files. Obviously, if this table becomes corrupted, the files cannot be located.

Fortunately, a backup copy is automatically retained. However, if the hard drive dies, this backup copy is useless. (Backup! Backup! Backup elsewhere!) While booting, the hard drive is recognized and a small area at the front of it is defined as the MBR, Master Boot Record. This contains enough information about the hard drive to locate the OS (Operating System) like Windows and load it. The OS has its own sub-conscious memory called the Registry which contains a wealth of information about the computer and files. This now loads and can take quite a while if it is large. If this Registry file or the MBR gets corrupted, it is a major problem. Fortunately, backup copies are automatically maintained. (Backup! Backup! Backup!)

Now we are almost home free. The next thing that happens is to load the StartUp files. These are programs that start automatically when you turn on your computer. If there are a lot of these it can drastically slow down the boot time. You can see and change these Startups by typing ''run msconfig'' and clicking on the StartUp tab. Check or uncheck the programs you desire. Keep these to a minimum for faster booting.

At this point Windows should be running and you are a happy camper to have full control. As you can see, lots of things happen before you are allowed at the controls, and all it takes is a minor glitch in any of these booting processes for your computer to fail to boot. It's amazing that it works at all! Frequent backups of your hard drives are the solution to major computer headaches. It is not a case of 'if' your computer crashes, it is 'when'.

Happy computing!

OPERATING SYSTEM NOTES & TIPS

Windows 8: Big Differences from Win7, and It Works!

By Karen Stagg, Golden Gate Computer Society
GGCS Newsletter, March 2012
www.ggcs.com editor (at) ggcs.org

Windows 8 is substantially different from previous versions of Windows, and, though it requires a learning curve, the task is not insurmountable, says GGCS member Ernie Ganas, who helped about 75 guests and members understand the newest Microsoft operating system (OS) during the February general meeting. To make the newness more palatable, Ernie offered that this new OS takes only 15 to 20 seconds to boot and 10 seconds to shut down. And the Internet loads instantly. In addition, Windows 8, which costs about $200, is a stable platform--more so than previous versions of Windows, which has been a concern since evennumbered Windows upgrades have notoriously had problems in the past. Windows Defender is standard in Windows 8 and replaces Microsoft Security Essentials.

The online app store for Windows 8 has 35,000 choices to purchase online, though many are free. The term ''apps'' is starting to replace the word ''programs,'' but [these terms] can still be used interchangeably. Be aware that many of the default applications or preferences are made by Microsoft, [e.g.] Bing instead of Google. If you don't like Bing, you can choose Google (or another search engine) , and Lock your choice in Internet Options>Tools.

Windows 8's (Pro version or higher) unique feature called ''Windows to Go'' (WTG) allows you to boot your workspace from a USB flash drive, so you can see your desktop as you would see it at home--your files, programs, etc.--on any computer you plug into. If you need to use someone else's computer, say, while traveling, WTG builds a virtual box that holds your Windows environment. Your information is never on that computer; it's all just on your flash drive.

The logon screen, though inconvenient to some, does serve a purpose. It allows a user to sign into a different computer and have their home configuration (including references) visible.

Windows 8 also helps us access our data by promoting the use of cloud storage with Sky Drive, available in various size options. Ernie suggests that the trend in computer security may be to virtual environments to protect computers better.

How it looks and works

The new Task Manager is well-designed, showing useful

information not available with previous Windows versions. The initial start-up screen shows many icons such as:

Weather Maps People Mail Games

But the ''search'' feature is the fastest way to find anything (apps, settings or files) on your Windows 8 computer, Ernie says. Windows 8 stores your data in a ''pool.'' It gathers files and data from multiple sources such as your flash drives, hard drives, or other storage mediums. The only drawback is that once the data is transferred to the pool, you can no longer determine from what device the information was transferred from.

Windows 8 was made to be used with a touch screen monitor, but those of us (the majority attending the meeting) still have the conventional screens and can handily navigate Win 8 with a mouse or touchpad. To return to the ''Tiles'' view, use the Windows key on the keyboard. To close a tile, the screen offers no obvious place to click Close. Instead, for those with a touchscreen, hold your finger at the top of the screen and ''brush'' the screen down or toward you, as if you were brushing something off the screen itself. To do this action with a mouse, click and hold at the top of the screen, then drag the window down instead of ''brushing'' it. Old timers remember the Alt + F4 keystroke works too. Users with touchscreen experience on an iPhone or Android, iPad or, tablet will be familiar with ''brushing'' or ''sliding'' motions. Ernie speculates that the computer industry is headed toward a tablet/phone touchscreen interface.

The touchscreen and decidedly visual platform isn't intuitive. Ernie's first challenge was figuring out how to start, restart, and shut down-he found no button in an obvious place. Windows 8 does offer some right-click options for shut down and closing a window. Finding them is another matter. In addition, Ctrl + Alt + Delete doesn't work in this version of Windows.

John King, one of our well-schooled computer buffs, responded to Ernie's request for an experienced assessment of this new system: ''It is a stretch to learn this system.'' Fortunately, the Microsoft store in Corte Madera is well set-up for customers to learn how to use all the bells and whistles in their products. Ernie suggests YouTube as a valuable source for tutorials..

HARDWARE NOTES & TIPS

In Search for a New Printer?

Chalmette Computer User Group Newsbits May 2013

Know Your Printing Needs

There are printers for every need under the sun - but rare is the printer that can fulfill many needs well. The challenge consumers face when shopping for a home printer is finding a printer that meets most of their needs and does so economically.

The first step in printer-shopping nirvana is to start your search with a very clear picture of what your printing needs are. Think back over what you've printed lately and what you plan to print in the future. Do you print mostly black and white text copies? Color photos? Color proposal drafts for your home business? What kind of printing you do is the biggest factor in what kind of printer you should shop for. The key is to buy a printer for the work you're doing, not the work you think you might be doing in the future (in other words: buy the printer for the business reports you print now, not the colorful scrap book pages you wish you had time to work on).

Understanding Printer Technology

The core of any printer is the technology driving the actual print process. The mechanics of printing can involve blasts of ink, powder toner, electrostatic charges, or any other number of combinations to produce an image. The major technologies on the market with their benefits and short comings are going to be detailed.

Ink Jet: Ink jet printers are used just about everywhere. Consumers frequently get them free with desktop computer packages, you'll find basic models all over big box computer and office stores at dirt cheap prices, and they've enjoyed fairly strong home-user market saturation.

At its most basic, ink jet printer technology is based on tiny little nozzles squirting a fine mist of ink onto paper. There are microchips in the print cartridges and an elaborate electromechanical framework supporting that process, mind you, but it's still akin to tiny little cans of spray paint working down the page.

The popularity of inkjet printers can be largely attributed to their versatility. Although low-end ink jet printers aren't the best at any specific type of printing they are great at doing a good-enough job for many types of printing (currently high-end ink jet and desktop photo printers based on ink jet technology dominate the consumer photo market).

They can print plain black and white documents, color photos, and print on a variety of media that other printers simply can't match. Since the ink is sprayed down on the surface, isn't heated, and (using the pass-through tray) it isn't bent or rolled, it's possible to use all sorts of media in most ink jet printers ranging from photo paper to specialty stocks like canvas and T-shirt transfers.

On the down side: ink jet printers are notoriously slow and the quality varies wildly. If you routinely print off multu-page reports and you want them hot off the press, you'll be waiting a while as your ink jet printer labors through them. The quality of the print is also dependent on what kind of onk and paper you're using. Business-oriented ink jet printers tend to use pigment-based inks which are superior for crisp lines band graphics (like fonts and company logos you find in most business printing). Ink jet that advertise superior photo printing usually use dye-based ink that blends much smoother--

thus your photos look more realistic with better colors. With many brands it is possible to buy ink cartridges for both purposes but it's less than ideal to swap out cartridges for different printing tasks.

The biggest *downside* of inkjet printing, by far, is the cost. You can easily pick up an inkjet printer for under $100 but consider that the company-subsidized bargain. They know you'll be back for expensive cartridge-after-cartridge. Yes, you can buy third-party cartridges and yes, you can buy home-refill kits. A casual search online will show there are many people happy with such options. Unfortunately it voids your warranty and refilling old cartridges is a hassle.

The Final Verdict for Ink Jet Printers

If you need to print a wide variety of materials (labels, transfer paper, glossy paper, regular printer paper, etc.) and you're not afraid of the higher supply cost incurred by frequently replacing ink cartridges, ink jet printer's are a versatile addition to a home office.

Laser/LED: Laser printers, unlike ink jet printers, do not rely on a supply of ink and a small spray nozzle to deposit onto the page. Laser printers function much more closely to photo copiers than they do to ink jet printers. An electrostatic charge is applied to the paper which is then passed ove a toner drum (toner is an ultra-fine powdered carbon and polymer blend) which is then fuse onto the paper with heat. This is why a drop of water doesn't ruin a laser printer printout the way it does a page from an inkjet printer--the toner is fused right onto the paper.

Speed and economical operation are the strongest selling points for laser printers. While ink jets can print on a variety of media with different inks in different colors, laser printers are monochromatic and limites to a much smaller range of media that can withstand the heat of the fusing process. (There are now color laser printers in the consumer price range but the color toner refills remain *prohibitively expensive* and keep color laser printing out of reach for most home users.)

An additional benefit of Laser printing: the toner and you can go for months (if not years) without printing and the next print off the printer will look just as good as the first. In that same time span ink jet cartridges can dry up, the nozzles can get gummed up/crusted over, and you may find yourself hastily shopping for new cartridges. Old laser jet printers can be pulled out of office storage and fired (them) up after years of neglect and they'll print like they were brand new.

Recent additions to the market, LED printers are essentially super-charged laser printers. Whereas a laser printer relies on an elaborate array of moving mirrors and focusing lenses (all of which must be in alignment) to generate the image on the toner drum, LED-based printers have a solid-state array in place of the laser array (thus there are no moving lasers, lenses, or mirrors to keep in akignment).

Currently you'll pay a small premium for an LED-based printer over a laser-based one but in return you'll get a potentially faster printer (LED units render the whole width of the drum image at the same time instead of scanning across with the laser) that's less prone to breakdown because the LED array is solid-state. That said, many have laser printers around the office that have been going strong since the 1990s - even with the scanning laser/moving mirrors they are still much more reliable than ink jet printers.

The Final Verdict on Laser/LED Printers: If your primary printing needs are black and white text prints with occasional supplemental images, print-for-print you can't beat a laser/LED printer. Your printer will last longer, spool up faster, and cost you less per-print than an ink jet by a wide, wide margin. How wide of a margin?

The toner cartridge in a HP LaserJet, for instance, might need replacement only a couple times in the past 10 or 12 years - that's years of printing for about $100 worth of toner.

Printer Features, Terms, and Jargon

For the home user the two printing types outlined above, ink jet and monochrome laser/LED, are the two best things going - color laser printing is still too expensive for casual home use. Once you've narrowed down which type of printer you're interested in, however, you've still got a mountain of features and terms to wade through. It's best to help hack down the dictionary of terminology to a manageable list.

One note before the terms are dug into, just like it's highlighted in any HDTV buying guide, manufacturers can (and often do) play fast and loose with the marketing terms they use. When in doubt, read consumer reviews about your printer before purchasing.

Resolution/DPI: You'll see references to DPI all over the place while printer shopping. DPI stands for Dots-Per-Inch and it indicates how many individual dots of ink or toner are deposited within one square inch of printable area. Please note that the Dots-Per-Inch nomenclature for printing is completely different than the Pixels-Per-Inch nomenclature used with monitors - a computer monitor can produce radically more detail/vibrant color with fewer pixels because of the nature of monitor construction and the superior color rendering of pixels versus printed ink.

While historically the DPI was worth paying attention to, printing technology has improved so much in recent years that the DPI number largely irrelevant. 150 DPI is an acceptable level for simple draft prints (like grocery lists), 300 DPI is more than fine for sharp fonts and logos, and as you creep into higher DPI you get an even better print. Low-end ink jet printers typically have 300-600 DPI printing capabilities and higher-end inkjets easily climb past 1,000 DPI. Laser/LED printers range anywhere from 600-2,000+ DPI. Unless you're specifically buying a printer for printing photos at home you can safely ignore the DPI rating all together as even the lowest end printer on the market will put out more than enough DPI for your letter/brochure/report printing needs.

Printing Speed: Although almost always expressed as PPM (pages per minute) you may also see printing speed notes as CPM (characters per minute) or, if you're shopping for photo printers, IPM (images per minute). If you're comparing ink jets

with laser printers you'll see a vast difference between PPM ratings. Ink jet printers are significantly slower than laser printers and manufacturers try to inflate the low PPM of ink jet printers by putting the draftpages-per-minute on the box and in the printer specsbe aware of this and half the PPM rating to get a better idea of the rate for high-quality prints.

Regard the printing speed as a ball park figure. Your real-world PPM will vary widely from the manufacturer's numbers based on what kind of printing you do (book report type prints on a laser printer, for example, will practically fly into the print tray where photos on inkjet might well be dry by the time they finish).

Connection Types: Long gone are printers that connect via serial or parallel ports; the current standard for wired connections is USB. Some printers especially laser/led printers, come with a network jack for network-based printing. More and more printers are shipping with built-in Wi-fi functionality. If you're interested in putting your printer somewhere else besides directly next to your primary computer, network and/or Wi-fi printing can be invaluable. It makes it super simple to put your printer out of the way and still be able to shuttle prints to it from your desktop, laptop, and mobile devices without the need for printsharing service on your primary desktop.

Mobile Printing: One of the newer features you'll find on printers is support for mobile/cloud printing. Unheard of even five years ago, it's now increasingly common for people to want to print from their phones, tablets, and other mobile devices. Printing from mobile devices is still in its infancy and you should be prepared for some hiccups and hassles.

That said, there are two primary solutions on the market. For iOS users who want to print from their iPhones and iPads, there are entire lines of AirPlay compatible printers from major manufactures. For Android and other mobile platforms (including iOS and BlackBerry - with a little tweaking) Google's Cloud Print connects mobile devices with both Cloud Print-enabled computers and classic stand-alone machines. For more information about cloud-enabled printers and how to link older printers to Cloud Print check out Google's Guide at: http://www.google.com/cloudprint/learn/printers. html#setup-hp#setup-kodak#setupepson

Internal Memory: Depending on the type of printer you buy it can have anywhere from a tiny amount to half a GB or so. Single function consumer inkjet printers usually have negligible amount of internal memory (multifunction ink jet printers will have more internal memory to support the print process and secondary functions like scanning). Laser printers generally have larger amounts of internal memory (ranging from 128-512MB). Generally speaking networked/Wi-fi enabled printers will have the most memory as it allows them to handle the extra print jobs coming in from across the network. Unless you plan on printing a large volume of material in a small time frame and/or to have a lot of material come in over the network, you don't need a large memory bank in the printer. If you're worried about it, check to see if the printer has an upgrade slot for future memory upgrades. Such upgrade slots are next to nonexistent on low-end ink jets but quite common on laser printers.

Multi-Function/All-In-One: Multifunction printers combine additional features into the body of the printer. Many models combine a scanner and printer, to create a tiny home copy machine. Others also include fax capability and even phone handsets. The upside is that it's usually much cheaper to buy a multifunction printer than it is to buy a printer, scanner, and fax machine. The downside is that if any component fails the whole unit can fail (or at minimum, need to be sent in for service).

When they work well, they're great and they save a lot of space. When they fail, they take out a whole chunk of your home office functionality with them. Multifunctional units might be avoided, but if you find a great deal on one and you're willing to accept the risk of putting all your eggs in one electronic basket, it might be worth the trade-offs. If you're leaning towards an All-In-One model make sure to read as many reviews as you can before purchasing it - you want to be sure to get one few people have had issues with.

Stand-Alone Printing: Whether they call it Stand-Alone, Walk-Up, PC-less, or another term, many printer companies now include functionality that allows for printing without a computer. Essentially you can walk up with a USB drive, SD card, or other type of removable media, plug it into the printer, and print from the flash memory instead of by sending the file from a computer. All things considered it's kind of a one trick pony. We certainly wouldn't buy a printer just for this feature. Where the feature does shine, however, is for standalone photo printers. It's quite convenient to stick the SD card or link the camera via cable to the printer for pick-and-print photo printing.

Monthly Duty Cycle: The duty cycle is an often over-looked stat on the printer spec sheet. The duty cycle is essentially a pages-per-month rating. If the statistics for the printer you're looking at indicate that the duty cycle is 1,000 pages per month, the manufacturer is essentially saying that you can expect to print up to that volume per month without any issues. You want to purchase a printer with a monthly duty cycle well beyond your needs to ensure trouble free operation. Printers with higher duty cycle ratings are build sturdier to survive the wear and tear of heavy printing.

By purchasing a printer with a duty cycle beyond what you actually need, you decrease the chances of prematurely wearing the printer out. Remember that laser jet printer that has been going strong since for 10 years mentioned earlier in the article? It's possible to have a duty cycle rating of 10,000 pages per month - and also could have less than a quarter of that through it a year. It will fall prey to antiquated cable formats and interfaces long before it gives up the printing ghost.

Duplexing: Duplexing is a fancy word for prints-on-both-sides. Printers without duplexing are stuck with manual duplex - which in turn is a fancy way of saying that you'll need to take the one-sided sheets and feed them back into the printer in the right order for a proper two-sided printout.

Manually duplexing is an enormous pain and not some-

thing you want to do with any regularity. Whether you want to save paper or like a thinner stack of print outs, make sure you get a printer that can properly duplex without you having to do the printout shuffle every time you want two-sided prints.

Manual Feed/Multipurpose Tray: If you print a lot of card stock, envelopes, or (for ink jet printers) any kind of nontraditional stock like thick scrap book pages or T-shirt transfers, make sure you purchase a printer with a manual feed tray and/or multipurpose tray. These allow you to by-pass whatever paper-manipulation the printer normally performs and send the media straight through the printer without any bending or excessive rolling. Since a business envelope would never make it through the roller system of a laser printer, for example, it's important to have a manual feed tray to send the envelope right in the front and out the back without any bending.

Consumables: Every printer consumers something - ink cartridges, toner cartridges, paper types, etc. - When shopping for a printer make sure to do a phantom shopping trip to restock it. That $50 ink jet printer isn't much of a bargain if it uses tri-color cartridges that cost $40 each and need to be replaced as soon as one of the three colors has run dry.

When shopping for ink jet printers make sure to check out what kind of cartridge system it uses. Can you replace each color individually? Are the black cartridges economical? If you're comfortable voiding the warranty with aftermarket cartridges and ink refills are they readily available and easy to use?

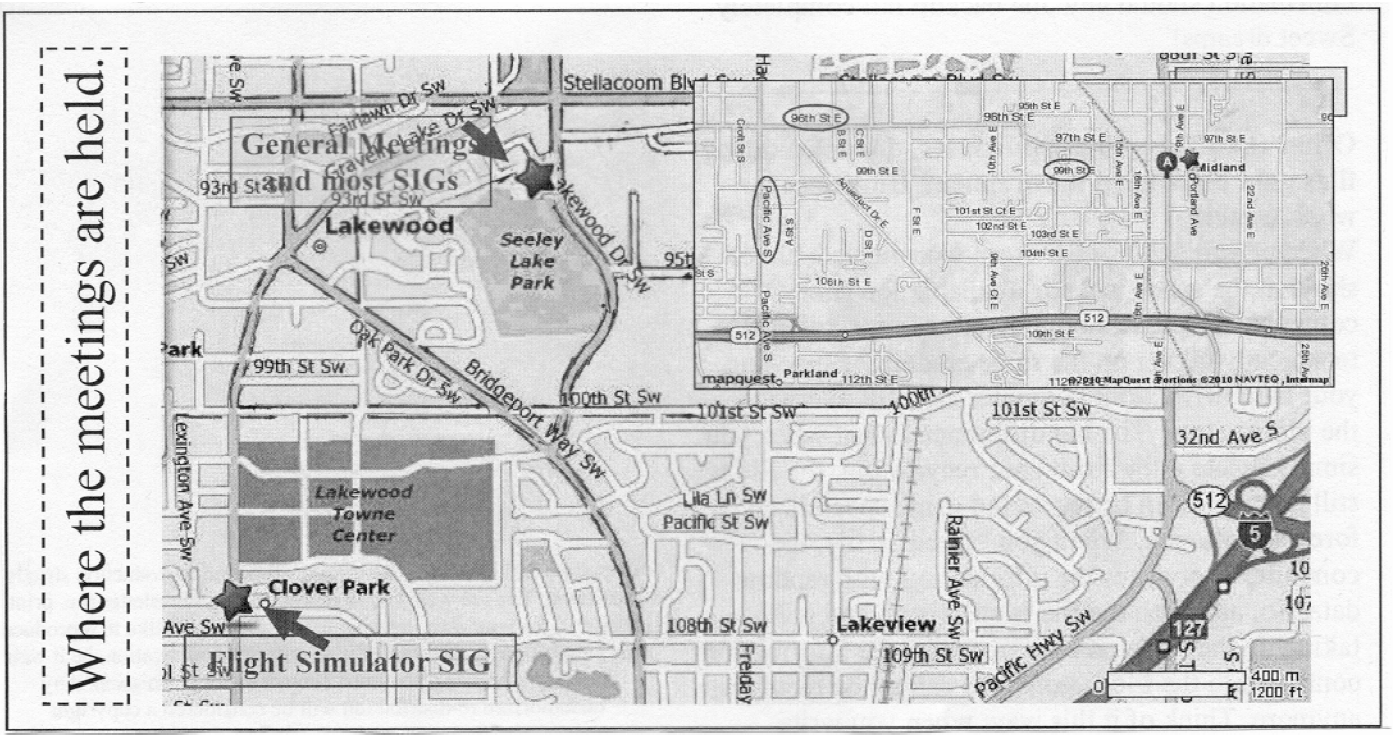
When shopping for laser/LED printers make sure you can replace just the toner drum. Some companies require that you replace the entire toner/fuser assembly when the drum runs drythis will significantly up your consumables cost over the life of the printer.

If you start by first focusing on your primary printing needs (bulk black and white versus black and white mixed with color), then on the significant features you want (duplexing and Wi-fi support), and finally comparing models to squeeze out those last fancy features (perhaps a touch screen interface and Cloud Print support), you'll ensure you end up with a printer that meets your most critical needs first and makes printing more enjoyable with well-picked secondary features.

Tacoma Area PC User's Group Information

TAPCUG General Meeting 2nd Saturday 9:30 AM
Officers
Acting Pres. - Ann Copeland
566-1608 CopelandAnn@comcast.net
Secretary - Rosalie Westerberg
589-5813 rosalie.westerberg@cptc.edu
Treasurer - Barbara Jackson
564-9664 C21Jackson@aol.com

TAPCUG SIG Leaders
Adobe Group - Kathryn Whitacre 752-2296
Flight Simulator - Curtis Poree' 474-7604
DustOff_2@msn.com
Linux - Joel Carlson
Fox7777@CarlsonCo.net
Multimedia - John Wickliffe 581-1393
John.wickliffe@gmail.com



TACOMA MEETING

When: **Mon 9 Sep 2013 -7:00 PM**
Where: SE Tacoma Community Centre
1614 99th Street E.
Tacoma, Washington

From I-5 take Exit 127 (Hwy 512) to Portland Ave., north on Portland to 99th, left over tracks. Building is on south side.

TOG BOARD MEMBERS

President Carl Tenning (206) 824-3843
& S. King County Rep c10ing@hotmail.com
web page: http://carlten.net.html
VP/Prog Chair Vacant
Sec/Treas Bob Henkel (253) 537-6732
bobh@netventure.com
Disk Library Tom Stepanek (253) 922-7939
tomstep116@gmail.com
Newsletter Editor Bob Thomson (253) 752-5582
rjthomson@comcast.net
Kitsap County Rep Ray Mills (360) 692-7568
e-mail: r.mills@rm-a.com
web page: http://www.rm-a.com

TOG Web Site: http://www.toggle.org

Deadline: 15th of this month to appear in next months' issue, if room

Corporate Sponsors:

Raymond Mills & Associates
www.rm-a.com

How To get To The Meeting

For those readers still unfamiliar with how to find our meeting place we have reproduced the map showing its relationship in Tacoma to Portland Ave S. and the 512 Freeway. The 512 Freeway can be entered from I-5 in Tacoma on the west or from Hwy 167 in Puyallup on the east. Proceed to Portland off-ramp and turn north to 99th Street. Some folks in the middle of Tacoma may prefer to take Portland southbound to 99th. At 99th turn west over the tracks and there you are!

TOGGLE

Tacoma OPEN Group for Micros
1808 Lenore Drive
Tacoma, WA 98406-1920

Change Service Requested

PROGRAMS

This Month's Meeting

Sadly this will be the last meeting of the Tacoma Open Group for Microcomputers. Our assets will be tranferred to the Tacoma Area PC Users Group (TAPCUG) and a one year TAPCUG membership will be purchased for all paid-up TOG members.

TAPCUG meets at 9112 Lakewood Drive SW, Lakewood, WA (a short distance south of Steilacoom Dr) as follows:

General meeting - 2nd Saturday
Adobe Group - 2nd Tuesday
Linux Group - 3rd Tuesday**
Multi-Media - 4th Tuesday
Flight Simulator - 4th Tuesday

** Note that the Linux SIG meets at the SE Tacoma Community Center with which TOG members are familiar. See map to the left.