December 2017

CALENDAR
SIG = Special Interest Group

This Week's Schedule
December 9 - Saturday - 1:10-2:50 PM
General Meeting - Leader: Ray Carlson
Location: Prescott Public Library; Founders Suite A & B

First Hour: Evaluating Software

Ray Carlson will look at a number of free websites that identify the best software in different categories. He will review the criteria each uses, how they test the software, the likely qualifications of the reviewers, how frequently they update the ratings, and how it might be possible to separate the biased ones from the impartial sites. The categories will include anti-virus programs, browsers, photo and video editing, and VPNs.

Second Hour: Phil Ball will present Tips and Tricks with insights into various topics that assist with regular computer activity.

In addition to the presentations, the following are typical events which take place at our General meetings:

1) We hold an informal Flea Market in which you are encouraged to bring in your excess computer equipment or software and make them available for others to enjoy at no charge. Please deposit give-away items on the table in the back marked "Free Stuff." Any items left here at the end of the meeting are subject to disposal.
2) If you have items that are just too good to give away, you may set up a separate table and hold your own sale.
3) We conduct a raffle of gift cards at the end of the meeting, so make sure to get a pair of tickets from whoever is in charge and place one on the item you'd like to win.
4) We will also accept your used ink and toner cartridges for recycling. They are turned in to Think4Inc for credits which PCS uses to purchase office supplies from them.

Future Meetings:

December 12 - Tuesday - 10:00-11:00 AM
Technology Help Hour - Leader: PCS Staff
Location: Prescott Public Library Training Lab; Third Floor

Ask a technology question and get help from members of the Prescott Computer Society. Bring your own laptop or mobile device or use a library laptop. This is a weekly drop-in service and registration is not required.

Future Meetings, continued:

December 16 - Saturday

No PCS meeting is scheduled.

December 19 - Tuesday - 10:00-11:00 AM
Technology Help Hour - Leader: PCS Staff
Location: Prescott Public Library Training Lab; Third Floor

Ask a technology question and get help from members of the Prescott Computer Society. Bring your own laptop or mobile device or use a library laptop. This is a weekly drop-in service and registration is not required.

December 23 - Saturday

No PCS meeting is scheduled.

December 30 - Saturday

No PCS meeting is scheduled.

Note that these dates are correct at time of publication but are subject to change.

It's time to renew your dues
if you haven't already done so.
The good news: **again this year, dues are only $24.** Please make checks payable to "PCS"
and present them to any Board member (gold nametag) or mail your check to:
Treasurer Prescott Computer Society

Prescott Computer Society
Current Officers & Board of Directors

Officers:		General Directors:	
President	Ray Carlson	Joan Baum	Murray Smolens
Vice Pres	Phil Ball	Jim Hamm	Dick Mason
Secretary	JB Burke	Ken Johnson	
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Recover, restore, backup, clone, image?

By Carol Picard, Editor / Webmaster, Midland Computer Club, MI

February 2017 issue, Bits and Bytes

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At our January club meeting we discussed how to recover in case of hard drive failure, virus, or if Windows won't start.

The most important steps for recovery need to be completed before a problem occurs.

First step is to create a recovery drive. Depending on the computer, this could require a 16Gb or 32Gb flash drive. My suggestion is to use a 32 Gb flash drive. Everything on the flash drive will be deleted and you cannot use the drive for anything else. Well-known brands, 32 Gb flash drives, were recently on sale for less than $10.00.

To create a recovery drive on a Windows 10 computer, connect the flash drive to the computer, search for recovery, click Create a recovery drive. Follow the prompts to create the drive. Make sure "Back up system files to the recovery drive" is selected. The minimum size of flash drive needed will be indicated.

A flash drive has less usable space than the amount of space indicated on the label, so, if it indicates 16Gb needed, you will actually need a 32Gb flash drive. It could take an hour or more to create the recovery drive. During the process, you will see a prompt to "Delete the recovery partition from your PC".

Do not click that option, so you still have the ability to run recovery from the hard drive. Make sure you get the message that the recovery drive was successfully created. If not, try again. After safely removing the flash drive, label it and store it in a safe place. The flash drive is bootable. When you need to use it, insert it in the computer, turn on the computer, and it should automatically boot from the flash drive. However, depending on the computer, you may have to access startup or bios options to boot from the flash drive.

The recovery drive offers more than one recovery option. Depending on what is wrong with the computer,

you may be able to save personal files, or may only be able to reinstall the Windows operating system and any programs that were installed by the manufacturer, which is why it is important to have a good backup.

The next step is to back up personal data, e.g., documents, photos, videos, etc. If you are using an email client installed on your computer, such as Outlook or Thunderbird, find out how to back up contacts and emails. Other software programs may store data in special locations, so you will need to find those as well.

Backing up personal data is not a one-time event. Develop a backup plan and follow it because the time that you miss creating a couple backups is when you are going to need them. One of our members mentioned he uses five flash drives for backing up data, backing up once a week, rotating through the flash drives. Based on your use of the computer, you may decide to back up more or less often. Why have more than one or two backups? If you accidentally delete a file, you may not realize it right away

and, if you only have a couple backups, by the time you realize the file is missing, you may have written over the last backup that contained that file. Store backup drives in a safe place, e.g., fireproof safe, or at least in another area in your house, away from the computer. For pictures, videos, really important documents, you might want to copy them to an additional flash drive and store that drive at another location.

Most software programs are downloaded directly to our computers so we don't have CD/DVD drives to reinstall from. Generally, if you need to reinstall the software, you can go to the vendor's website and download it again. However, there may be restrictions on downloading the software more than once, or there may be a charge to upgrade to a more current version. After downloading new software, copy the installation files to a flash drive or external hard drive. When software comes with activation codes, I print

that information to a pdf file and save the pdf file on the same drive as the installation files.

You can manually back up files by copying them from your computer to your flash or external drive.

Or you may decide to use a software program to manage the backup process. Both free and paid backup programs are available, although some free ones have limited functionality. When purchasing a new external hard drive, it may include backup software. Backup software lets you specify what to back up and to set a schedule for automatic backups. Some have the option to schedule an initial full backup and subsequent smaller backups, called incremental backups, backing up files that have changed since the last full backup. One caution is that viruses can spread to attached drives. Instead of automatic backup, which requires the backup drive be connected at all times, you can run manual backups, connecting the drive only while running the backup.

Online backup and cloud storage are other options to consider. There is generally a charge for online backup service and may be a charge for cloud storage, depending on how much data you have. An advantage is that you can generally access your data from another device, e.g., computer, tablet, smartphone. Onliine/Cloud storage may not prevent loss of data if your computer is locked by ransomware.

With any backup solution, you should occasionally check to make sure the backups are running successfully and that you can recover files. Consider using a program that allows you to restore select files without using the software that was used to create the backup. You may find you need a file while your computer is out of commission and you want to be able to connect the backup drive to another computer and access files without having to install software on that computer. Also, if you only need one or two files, you don't want to have to restore the entire backup.

Whatever backup strategy you use, make sure it is backing up everything you need. I installed a new hard drive for someone whose hard drive had failed. He was using online backup so was confident he would recover all of his data but, the default settings for the service he was using did not include videos, so they were not being backed up and we were unable to recover the videos from the failed hard drive.

While the terms image and clone are often used interchangeably, the exact definition of clone is when two hard drives are installed in a computer and data is

copied from old to new, which requires that the original hard drive is still working. The last time I purchased a new hard drive, it came with a version of True Image software that provided this capability and I was up and running in a short period of time with all of my user ids, programs, data and settings.

When creating a system image most flash drives will be too small so you will need an external hard drive. Depending on the size of the external hard drive, multiple images can be saved to the same drive. Name the image (or the folder you save it in) so you can identify when it was created and, if you have multiple computers, which computer it was created from. The program used to create the image prompts you to create a bootable flash drive, which only has to be done once. You boot the computer from the flash drive and it contains the software to restore the image from the external drive. If you have multiple computers, you may need to create a bootable flash drive for each computer. In most cases, an image or clone can't be used to restore to a different computer, although some software may support this.

Another term discussed was System Restore. This option usually requires being able to boot into Windows. System Restore can be used if the computer isn't working correctly and you suspect recent changes caused the problem, or as an initial troubleshooting step, before resorting to recovery. Make sure system restore is turned on. After upgrading from Windows 7 to Windows 10, I discovered that system restore had been turned off. Windows automatically creates restore points before performing certain actions. You can manually create a restore point, e.g., before installing new software.

To access system restore, search for system and click create a restore point. It should open System Protection under System Properties. Under Protection Settings, it will list the drives on the computer and whether protection is on or off. Normally, you just want protection on for (C:). If it is not on, click Configure and turn it on. Make sure the percentage of disk space available for system restore is set to something other than 0, 10% should be good in most cases.

To create a restore point, click Create and follow the prompts. To revert to a previous restore point, click System Restore… , click Next. To see more restore points, click to place checkmark in box to left of "Show more restore points". Click the restore point you want to use and click Next. If you know when the problem started, chose the restore point just before that date/time. If you don't know which restore point to use, start with the most recent and, if that doesn't fix the problem, run System

restore again and choose a different restore point. System restore is not supposed to affect your personal files, but make sure your backup is current, just in case.

In some cases, system restore fails and Windows automatically returns the computer to how it was before system restore ran. There is also an option to undo a system restore.

After restoring to a date prior to a Windows update or a software installation, it may be necessary to reinstall the update or software.

If you suspect you have a virus on your computer, and don't know whether any of the images/backups contain the virus, it is probably best to use the Windows recovery drive to reinstall Windows and then manually restore personal files. If you don't have a recovery drive, but have access to another computer, you can create recovery media for Windows 10. (https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/software-download/windows10). Previous versions of Windows required entering a code to activate. However, once Windows 10 has been installed and activated, you don't need to enter a code when reinstalling Windows 10 on that computer. When restoring from a backup that may contain infected files, don't restore executable files (.exe) as they are more likely to contain viruses.

With the recovery drive and good backups, you will be prepared when a problem occurs.**Ω**

Whoosh! …

By George Harding, Treasurer, Tucson Computer Society

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One of the very useful products I came across at CES was Whoosh!

It is a screen-cleaning product that not only clears out all the grime and fingerprints from your phone's screen, but also protects it from further contamination. It works on other screens, as well. I use it on my tablet and my laptop, too. I could use it on my flat screen TV also, but haven't yet.

The product is a spray bottle of liquid, which is non-toxic. and a polishing cloth. You spray a bit of liquid on the cloth, wipe the surface of your screen, then use a dry part of the cloth to polish the screen to a pristine finish. The cloth has been treated with an antimicrobial product to protect the cloth from contamination.

There are several packages in the product, including packets of screen wipes, as well at the customary spray bottle and cloth packages. The latter come in three sizes. The product is available in most office supply and computer stores.

This is a great product to have at home or office. It gives you clean screens in a flash.

Whoosh!

www.whooshscreenshine.com

Price varies from $10 to $20**Ω**

(Editors Note: *Reviews are very good. Most point out that it is* <u>fingerprint resistant</u> *as advertised but that it will show some. Amazon has lower prices.*)

Interesting Internet Finds

By Steve Costello, President / Editor, Boca Raton Computer Society

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In the course of going through more than 300 RSS feeds, I often run across things that I think might be of interest to other user group members.

The following are some items I found interesting during the month of January 2017.

> 3 Easy Ways to Unsubscribe from Email Lists

http://www.wonderoftech.com/unsubscribe-emails/

If you are getting too much email, because you have subscribed to a lot of email lists, check out

this post to learn how to trim down how much email you get by unsubscribing.

>Yes, You Need a Disposable Email Address!

http://askbobrankin.com/ yes_you_need_a_disposable_email_address.html

Another way around the email list problem, is to use disposable email addresses. Bob Rankin explains what they are, and some ways to get them.

>Understanding the Basics of Two-Factor Authentication

https://blog.malwarebytes.com/101/2017/01/ understanding-the-basics-of-two-factor-authentication/

If you are not using two-factor authentication everywhere you can, you should. Check out this post, so you understand the basics.

>Should You Leave Your Computer On or Off?

https://www.pcmech.com/article/leave-computer-on-off/

There is no clear-cut answer that I know of. But, this post tells about the pros and cons to both options.

>Refresh Firefox Browser to Make It Run As Good As New

http://www.thewindowsclub.com/refresh-firefox-browser-windows

After a while, all browsers get to where they aren't running smoothly. This post tells you how to refresh your Firefox browser by resetting everything to the defaults.

I tried this myself, and it is amazing how much better Firefox is running now, without all those things I don't need removed.

>How to Fix Bluetooth Pairing Problems

http://www.techlicious.com/how-to/how-to-fix-bluetooth-pairing-problems/

Bluetooth devices are a lot more prevalent these days, which means there are more pairing problems too. Check out this post to learn how to fix those kinds of problems.

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Most Fridays, more interesting finds will be posted on the Computers, Technology, and User Groups Blog:

http://ctublog.sefcug.com/tag/interesting-internet-finds/

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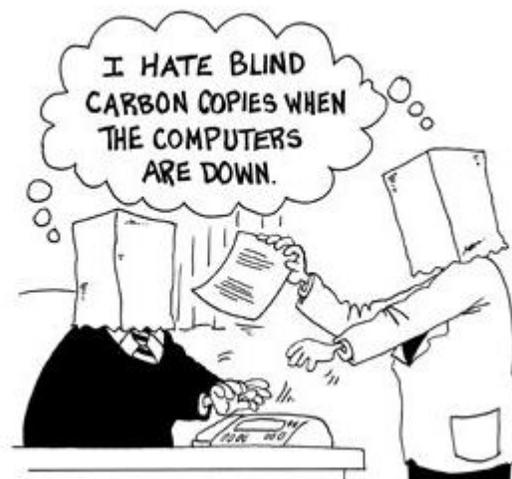
Welcome to
NEW
MEMBER

Sean Souva