BITS AND BYTES

Midland Computer Club
Midland Michigan

January 2014

GENERAL CLUB MEETING
7:00 P.M.
4th Wednesday of the month at the
Midland Community Center
2001 George St., Midland, MI

This month's date:
   January 22, 2014

This month's topic:
Data Privacy Day is January 28th - we
will be discussing online and offline
safety.

What you missed!
December was the Club Holiday Party

Program Coordinators
Howard Lewis   lewis3ha@chartermi.net

Bill Tower   tower.w@gmail.com

Please let Howard or Bill know of topics you
would like covered at future meetings.

President Piper's Ponderings

For me January means setting goals and making predictions for the coming year. Lately, my goals have had less to do with learning and doing new things and more about hanging on to what I already am doing.

The CES show in Las Vegas and the current Detroit Auto Show both are much ado about glitz and concept and not so much about practicality. I don't need a car that thinks for me, nor would I use a refrigerator that talks to me. Mostly, I can't afford to repair one of these digital marvels.

What I do see coming in 2014 are at least five items that might warrant discussion in our Club meetings: (1) what are the ramifications of Charter's recent moves, (2) how will the court ruling on 'net neutrality' affect me, (3) what's with all the wearable digital paraphernalia, (4) how should I feel about the privacy issue in my life, and (5) what price am I willing to pay for security in my life.

January 28 is Internet Privacy Day, so the Board has decided to attack #4 in the above list for the January General Meeting. Carol Picard has put together a series of slides for our January meeting that will provide the basis for further discussion on how each of us handles this privacy issue.

Organization on our computers—and by inference—in our life is another topic which the Board feels should be addressed, possibly in February. We also would like to again kick the dead horse issue of Windows XP in March. This likely will take the form of how to load and run various flavors of Linux on older PCs.

Did you see the article in the Sunday MDN about a Midland graduate starting a 3D printing service in Ann Arbor? It will take some time for this 3D printing idea to find its niche, but I personally like the 3D printers which use chocolate as the "ink." Print me a 9" chocolate chip cookie for lunch, robot!

(The above comments are the opinion of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Midland Computer Club.)

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Board Meeting

First Thursday of the month
7:00 PM
Next Meeting - February 6, 2014
Chapel Lane Presbyterian Church,
5501 Jefferson Ave., Midland MI

Useful, useless and strange (in no particular order) Web Sites:

http://www.complaints.com/
Want to complain about a business that has done you wrong? Post your complaint here.

https://www.badwarebusters.org/
Get help on how to identify, remove, and prevent badware.

https://haveibeenpwned.com/
Every site that you have an account with will have an email address to contact you. You can check to see if your account has been compromised in a data breach by providing your email address.

http://tinyurl.com/bjcll
Wikimedia Commons is a media file repository making available public domain and freely-licensed educational media content to everyone.

http://tinyurl.com/p3kffd5
You'll get a chuckle out of these Japanese gymnasts on a pommel horse!

Membership Enrollment Form

NAME _____   PHONE _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____   ZIP _____

EMAIL ADDRESS _____

Membership dues   FAMILY ($20)   STUDENT ($15)   New Member _____   Renewal _____

Please fill out the above form and mail it along with payment of check or money order to :

MIDLAND COMPUTER CLUB   Attn: Membership Chairman
1816 Bauss Ct
Midland, MI 48642-4023

You may also pay for membership at a regular club meeting

Tips, Tricks & Techniques

Backing Up Your Windows Drivers

If you've ever needed to reinstall Windows, you probably know that Windows uses its default drivers out of the box and then they must be updated to the current vendor drivers. This process can be quite a pain! One way to simplify this is to simply backup your drivers. All of the drivers that Windows uses are stored in a few folders on your computer, and although there are third party applications that will do this for you, you may decide to do it yourself. To accomplish this, try the following procedure:

  Open Windows (or File) Explorer and navigate to *%SystemRoot%,* where *%SystemRoot%* is the location where Windows is installed (frequently just called ***Window*** on your C drive).
  Next drag the folder *inf* to an external device (DVD, USB stick or an external hard disk).
  Now, go to the *System32* folder and copy the folders *drivers* and *DriverStore* to the external device. (There may also be a folder called *DrvStore* on your computer too. This folder should be backed up also.)

Now you have all of your up-to-date drivers backed up for a future reinstall. If in the future you have to reinstall Windows, after the reinstall, simply copy the files from the backup device to their proper location and restart your computer. If there are devices that do not take the updated drivers, simply go into **Device Manager**, select each device with the yellow triangle and select *Update driver*. This should be done using the automatically find updates.

Open A Command Prompt In A Specific Folder

If you use the **Command Prompt** to perform operations within a folder, you can open the **Command Prompt** and migrate to the folder desired. A faster way:

  Open *Windows/File Explorer*
  Click in the *Address bar* (all of the text should be highlighted)
  Type *cmd* and press *Enter*

Now a *Command Prompt* window will open with the focus on that particular folder.

Copying Files Between Two Folders

If you want to copy files from one folder to another, the simplest way is to use two **Windows/File Explorer** windows and the **Windows** key. To accomplish this perform the following steps:

  Press *[Win]+E* (this opens a **Windows/File Explorer** window)
  Press *[Win]+[Left Arrow]* (this aligns the window to the left side of the screen)
  Press *[Win]+E*
  Press *[Win]+Right Arrow]* (this aligns the second window to the right side of the screen)

Now you will have two Windows/File Explorer windows open with each half the screen width. This makes it easy to navigate to the proper locations and copy the files using drag/drop.

ARTICLE INDEX

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The Smiley Face Turned 22 years old September 19th

Art Gresham, Editor, Under the Computer Hood User Group, CA
September 2013 issue of Drive Light, www.uchug.org, 1editor101 (at) uchug.org

"Scott Fahlman was the first documented person to use the emoticons :-) and :-(, with a specific suggestion that they be used to express emotion. The text of his original proposal, posted to the Carnegie Mellon University computer science general board on 19 September 1982 (11:44), was thought to have been lost, but was recovered 20 years later by Jeff Baird from old backup tapes."

19-Sep-82 11:44   Scott E Fahlman   :-)
From: Scott E Fahlman <Fahlman at Cmu-20c>

I propose that the following character sequence for happy:

:-)

Read it sideways. Actually, it is probably more economical to mark things that are sad, given current trends. For this, use

:-(

The information in the paragraph above is quoted from Wikipedia http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Emoticon#cite_note-smiley-1

It is a very abbreviated summary of the story of how the keyboard characters we now call a Smiley Face came into existence. It is part of a much longer story of the inner workings of the earliest forms of computer to computer, and user to user communications, long before the internet as we know it. These 'Bulletin Boards' were first commonly used among academics. It all began as a rather prankish comment following this post on the Computer Science Bulletin Board System at Carnegie Mellon University.

"At around noon on September 16th, 1982, and in response to a similar scenario involving pigeons, Neil Swartz posted the following hypothetical situation to the CMU CS BBS:"

"*There is a lit candle in an elevator mounted on a bracket attached to the middle of one wall (say, 2" from the wall). A drop of mercury is on the floor. The cable snaps and the elevator falls. What happens to the candle and the mercury?*"

A very delightful reading of the complete story of the evolution of **:-)** is at
http://rhizome.org/editorial/2013/mar/13/emoticon1/
I am sure you will be ROFL when you read it.

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iCan't: 5 Things Android Users Take for Granted and iPhone Users Just Can't Do

Danny Stieben, Writer, MakeUseOf.com, May 6, 2013, http://bit.ly/12bdyZ2

Have you ever thought that there might be a reason Android users brag about their customizability? Sure, as an iPhone user, you can add and configure apps, change your wallpaper, and otherwise make yourself feel at home. But at the end of the day, you've only changed a few small details. If you happen to have jailbreaked your iPhone to run Cydia and are enjoying some of the best Cydia tweaks, you can do more. But users with stock iOS are able to do much less. Don't believe me? Check out these different things that Android users can do but iOS users cannot.
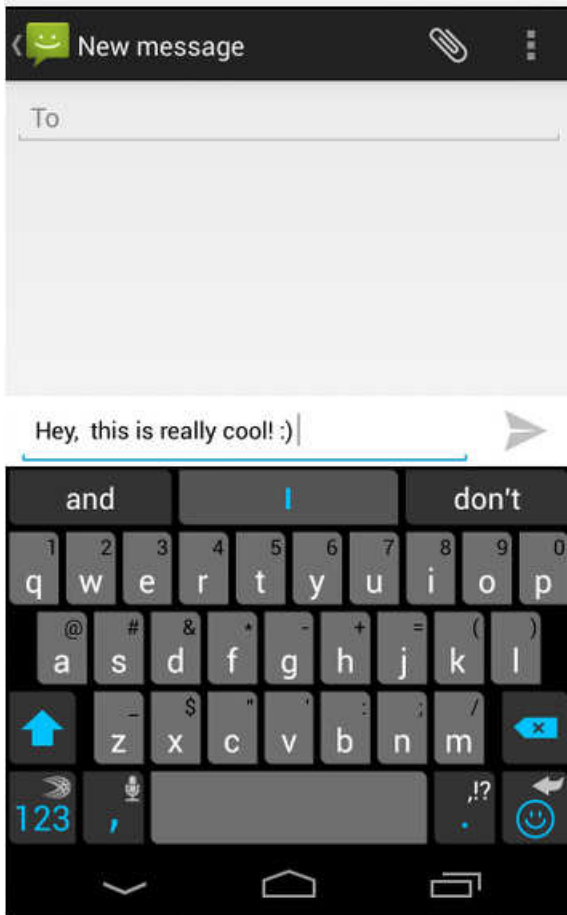
From changing your keyboard to using a live wallpaper to putting an entirely new face on your phone (in the form of a launcher), Android lets you customize your phones in remarkably flexible ways.

Keyboards

If you don't like the keyboard on your iPhone, tough luck. Without jailbreaking the device, there's no way to get a different keyboard app on your iPhone. On the contrary, Android is built to allow users to choose between different installed keyboards, from the very capable default keyboard to Swype to SwiftKey. This not only allows for different looking keyboards, but also different typing mechanisms (tapping versus swiping) and prediction algorithms for those fast typers with low accuracy. I'm not saying that the iPhone's keyboard is bad, but I highly doubt that every iPhone user likes it and those picky users will just have to endure.
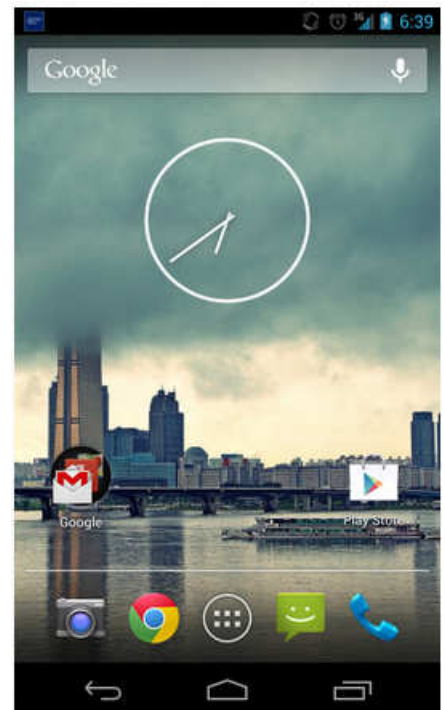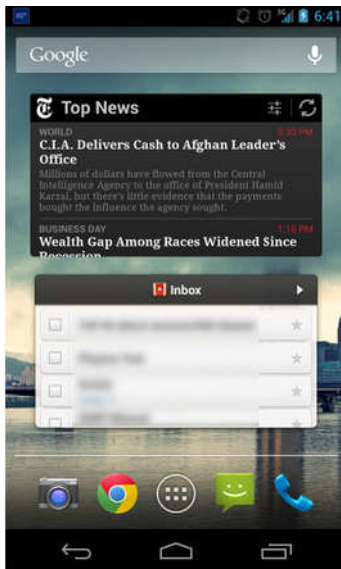
(Continued from page 5)

Home Screen Mechanics

The iPhone's home screen is one of the most iconic features of the iOS platform — big icons in a 4×4 grid (or 4×5 grid with the iPhone 5) and four buttons along the bottom bar for commonly accessed apps. Besides changing the wallpaper and rearranging the order of the icons, there's nothing that the iPhone user can do to change how it looks. For example, a mechanic that annoys me would be the fact that I cannot move an icon from the very top of the screen to the very bottom — all icons fill in row by row. At least iPhone users can move their icons onto a new page.
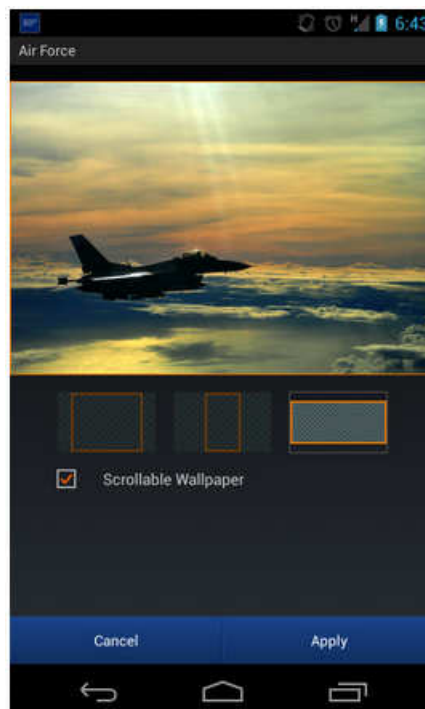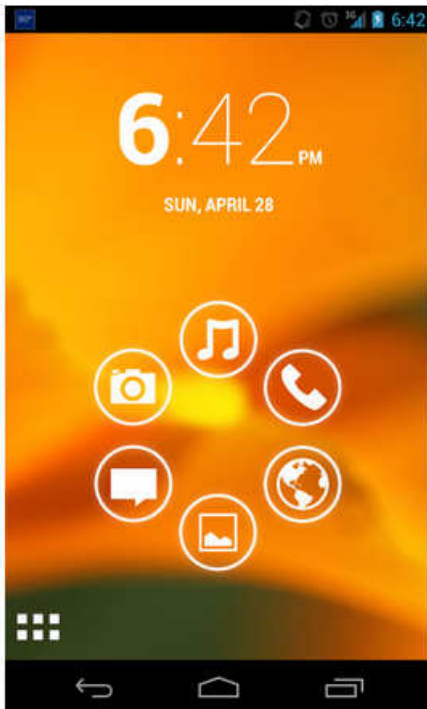
Widgets

Android launchers also have another cool feature that is entirely lacking in iOS — widgets. These nifty tools can be placed anywhere in your home screens and offer quick access to the related app's functionality. For example, the Wunderlist widget will display your to-do list, the New York Times widget can be configured to show the latest news and weather.

Launchers

I absolutely love the default Android launcher, but others may want to use other alternatives. With Android, you can install additional launchers and choose which one you'd like to use. Each launcher can offer different functionality, such as themes and the ability to add more pages to your home screen. With iOS, this is also completely impossible as Apple wants everyone using the same launcher.

Wallpapers

Android includes some creative features with wallpapers to give your phone a nice touch with small details. Whenever you set a new image as your wallpaper, you can choose how you'd like

to resize it, as well as determine whether the image should be "scrollable" or not. When set to scrollable, the wallpaper moves left and right as you switch between different pages in your home screen. Otherwise, the wallpaper would remain completely still as you switch between pages in your home screen. Additionally, Android also offers the use of live, animated wallpapers. These cool wallpapers are similar to Windows Vista's DreamScene wallpapers; however, are more appropriate on a smartphone as they usually include smooth animations and other computer-generated objects, and not a real-life video. Some live wallpapers animate on their own, while others react to the user's touch. They can be pretty fun to mess around with, and with (usually) minimal battery impact.

Android vs iPhone – Conclusion

Believe me now? Android users can change some significant stuff to their phones, without having to resort to rooting or installing custom ROMs. I'm sure this list isn't entirely inclusive of all things Android users can do that iPhone users cannot, but it gives you a good idea of how you can do more with Android.

What's your favorite feature of your Android or iOS device? What do you wish it could have that the competitor has? Let us know in the comments!

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Marble

by Cal Esneault, Vice President, leader of many Open Source Workshops & SIGS, Cajun Clickers Computer Club, LA, December 2012 issue, Cajun Clickers Computer Club www.clickers.org, http://cccclinuxsig.pbwiki.com, ccnewsletter (at)cox.net

Marble is free educational software from KDE that gives a virtual atlas to help students, educators, or anyone interested in geography. The most feature-rich version is provided for computers running a KDE 4.x operating system, but satisfactory versions are available for other Linux systems (QT version), Windows OS, or MAC OS. I downloaded it on my Ubuntu 12.04 system directly from the Ubuntu Software Center.

The basic map view (see below) allows you to show the earth as a globe or with Mercator or flat view projections. Simple mouse movements let you quickly change to different locations and to zoom magnification as required.
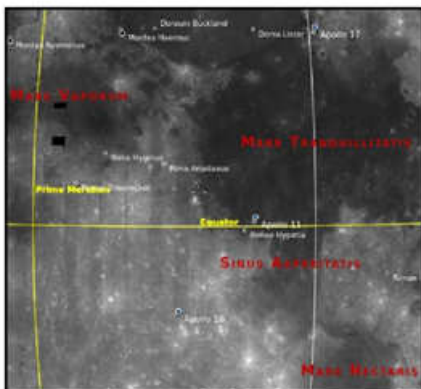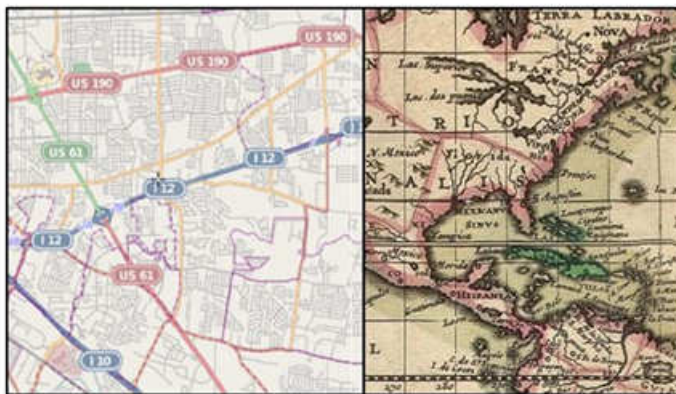
There are several different types of map views for any selected region: atlas style, OpenStreetMap view, plain map, view at night showing artificial lighting intensity, satellite views, historical map views, temperature contours (July/December averages), and precipitation countours (again for July and December). There is also a feature to determine distance between locations. At right I measured the distance between Houston and Denver (1,422 miles).

On most views you can modify the type of detail shown (for example, places of interest, political boundaries, bodies of water). Below are examples of other views. On the left is a street map of Baton Rouge, and on the right is an historical map of North America circa 1689.

There was also a map view of our moon. Besides being able to "see" the dark side, you can also see where Apollo landings have been made. In the full KDE version, views of Mars and Venus are also available.

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Marble may not rival Google Earth currently, but it is an important effort by the open-source community to provide simple and effective solutions which are not encumbered by DRM or other legal roadblocks. The interface is very easy to learn and is ideally suited for younger users. There is an export function that lets you copy the selected images for use with other software or for use in class assignments. Bottom line, it's fun to use and is a modern substitute for the traditional bulky atlas on the bookshelf.

Go to http://marble.kde.org/ to get a free download and learn more about the Marble project. Other open-source software of interest in this area would be Stellarium (celestial maps) and OpenStreetMap (worldwide geographic data and mapping).

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Simple Tips for Microsoft Word
Sandy Berger, CompuKISS, www.compukiss.com, sandy (at) compukiss.com

If you use Microsoft Word, you will want to read this list of simple tips that can make you feel like an expert in no time at all.

Find a Recently Used Document
It seems to happen to everyone. You created a document just the other day and now you can't find it. Don't worry. Word makes it easy to find anything you recently worked on. Just click on File then choose Recent. In Word 2010, Recent Documents will be listed on the left side of the screen and Recent Places will be listed on the right. They are listed in order with the most recently used items on the top. Scroll down and choose the document you are looking for. On this list of recent documents screen, you will see a pin next to each document. Click on the pin and that file will be pinned to the upper part of the recent window for quick access at any time.

Correct a Mistake
None of us like to admit to making mistakes, but we all make them. Microsoft Word and many other programs will respond to this quick keystroke that can correct just about any mistakes you can make. Just hold down the Ctrl key and pressing the Z key at the same time. This will undo your last action. You can use this function to erase a sentence, delete formatting that you've just added, or just about anything else. This shortcut is especially useful when you don't know what just happened. If the page suddenly looks different and you don't know what happened, try CTRL+Z to undo the last action. If the undo is not satisfactory, you can use CTRL+Y to redo the action. This function is even more useful when you realize that you can undo more than one previous action. Continuing to press CTRL + Z will undo one change at a time often back up to 12 or more changes. Remember this tip will also work in many other programs, as well.

Print only Part of a Document
We all like to print the documents we create, but sometimes we just want to print one or two paragraphs rather than the entire document. Word, and other programs like it, make that easy to do. Just highlight the portion of the text you want to print and click the Print icon. When the printer dialog window appears, look for an area that says Page Range and choose the option Selection.

In Word 2010, they have changed the print option box. If you are using Word 2010, look for the Setting area of that print box and click the down arrow next to Print All Pages to get to the Print Selection choice. In either case, if Print Selection is grayed out, it means you did not highlight anything.

Zoom In To See Better
Newer versions of Word have a zoom control box at the bottom right of the screen. You can use the slider to see as much of the screen as you like and to make the text larger or smaller. If you have an older version of Word you can accomplish the same thing by holding down the CTRL key and moving the wheel on your mouse up and down.

Some people have trouble highlighting text. That simple click-and-drag technique can be difficult if your hand shakes. So here is a simple technique that can be used. It can also be a valuable time-saver. To highlight a word, double-click on that word. To highlight a paragraph, triple-click on any word in that paragraph. To highlight a single sentence, hold down the CTRL key and then click on any word in that sentence.

If you found any of these tips useful, I encourage you to investigate Word a little farther. We have just touched the surface here. Word is filled with useful features and shortcuts that can be beneficial even to the casual user.

The Tip Corner – June 2013
Bill Sheff, Novice SIG Coordinator, Lehigh Valley Computer Group, PA
June 2013 issue, The LVCG Journal, www.lvcg.org, nsheff (at) aol.com

Making a copy of your file listing
I wanted to make a list of all my music files. Back in the old Days of C: prompts it was very simple to make a copy of all the files in one of your folders. And even to print them out. I believe there are a few programs out there that can do that for us, and if you want one just Google 'how do I make a list of file names' and a few will pop up. But here is a simple and free solution.

Suppose you wanted to make a list of all your songs. Open up the folder with all the music files. It would look something like this: C:/Documents/Music/Mp3. Go to that pane and highlight the complete line and then type in cmd. You should get a black DOS screen with the name of the folder that is open. At the prompt just type in dir *.* >name.txt. Close the DOS screen. Now, if you look in the open folder you should find the name.txt file that you just made. You can copy it anywhere and open it with notebook or any other text editor. If you want to print out a copy right from the DOS screen you can just type dir /p.

Keep your PC clean with Microsoft Security Essentials
While there are a lot of Security Programs out there, both free and commercial, if you haven't yet tried Microsoft Security Essentials you should give it a try. This program is not only free, it protects you against viruses, spyware and Malware, works quietly in the background and doesn't slow down your system at all. The security suite is integrated into the operating system and as a result it's able to function in the background without hogging system resources and hindering any

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work that's going on in the foreground. As per various tests conducted online, it's able to detect and remove 99% of all threats in various virus and spyware forms.

This performance is not only impressive but a huge upgrade over what Microsoft had to offer previously. One little tip. Before running a scan always check for updates since the definitions are updated frequently.

Personalize Your Gmail Inbox Background With A Photo
We all love the functionality of our Gmail Inbox, but it is a little plain. We can spruce it up by adding a personal photo.

Start by selecting Settings in your Gmail inbox and choose Themes. There are a wide variety of themes to choose from, but scroll down to Custom Themes where you can choose between a light or a dark theme.

You'll be asked to select a background photo. You can choose from featured photos, your own Google + photos uploaded from your phone, a URL or you can upload the photo of your choice. Most of your photo is going to be covered up by the photo, so choose something that looks nice with just the edges showing. Pictures with a landscape orientation look best. Since you will only see parts of the photo, you'll probably want to experiment with different images and see what works best.

OVERDRIVE
If you still go to the library to borrow books, then you should check out Overdrive. Overdrive is the software that you use to download the media from your library. You can go to your library's website to get the information, or just go to overdrive.com. There is an app for phones and tablets. You can search Overdrive for libraries all over the country. To download books you must have a library card from any library you want to borrow from. Once your library is found you can open it up in Overdrive enter your library card number and a password if required. The good news is that you can get audiobooks or E-books and download them directly to your Bookshelf. The following formats are available: Kindle, Overdrive READ, Epub, and PDF (e-books) as well as .MP3 and WMA for audiobooks. Android phones cannot play the WMA versions of the book.

The bad news is that your library has only licensed so many copies of any book to lend at a time, so the book that you want may not be available. The website will tell you how many copies the library has, how many are available and how many holds there are ahead of you. If you can't check it out immediately, you can simply place a hold on the book, just like you would a paper book, and the library will notify you when it will be available for you to download. Whether you check it out immediately or get it through a hold you will have three days from the time that it becomes available to download it.

Some libraries offer different "lending" periods for their books. If they do, choose the period that would be right for you. A usual time is around 14 days, but while you cannot renew a book you haven't finished you can re-download it. Usually the book will disappear by itself, but you can

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have it returned and deleted at any time. You can usually borrow up to seven books at one time. It is also possible to transfer your book to another device. You can change the font, rewind and forward at will, and they are so light to carry around. If you have the app on your phone or tablet you can download via Wi-Fi.

Erase Your Hard Drive

We all know that if we are going to destroy our PC or give it away there is a problem with data on the hard drive. When you delete something in Windows—it just marks it to be written over . Formatting a hard drive does not permanently erase stored data, it just reconstructs the allocation table and checks the blocks on the disk. With the right software, old files can be recovered. Well here are a few programs that will totally erase data. Two free programs that can do the job are:

Darik's Boot and Nuke which is an application that you can install on a bootable floppy or CD Rom. Boot and Nuke uses several methods to wipe the data on your drive to an unrecoverable state. Go here to get it: http://dban.sourceforge.net

The second title is Eraser 6. Though this software is free as well, a $15.00 donation is encouraged. This software does a great job of sanitizing your hard drive by removing all magnetic and solid state memory. It does this by using several different techniques including "pseudorandom data overwrite" and techniques defined by the Department of Defense. http://www.heidi.ie/eraser/

Once one of these procedures is performed the drive is ready to be given away or thrown out without fear of privacy invasion, fraud, or worse. A word to the wise.

Microsoft

As you might know, Microsoft is converting Hotmail to Outlook. There are pros and cons on both sides, but in the meantime here are a few Word and Outlook tips.

Word Screenshots

Microsoft Word 2010 provides you with the capability to take a screenshot from another open program and paste it within Word. Just click the Insert tab and select Screenshot.

Office 2010 Search

When searching for text, you may find a word in several locations in a document. To help you quickly locate the specific use of the word you want to change, Microsoft Word 2010 provides you with an excerpt of the text surrounding the word you searched for. Examine all of the excerpts to find the exact text you want to find or change.

Outlook Conversation View

In Outlook 2010, you can group messages by subject, so you can condense email threads by removing any redundant messages.

Paste Preview In Office 2010

Office 2010 offers a feature where you can preview the different formatting choices before you actually paste. Just hover your mouse over the "Paste Options" menu when pasting content.

Websites to Broaden Your Computer Horizons

Jim Fromm, Editor, MOAA Computer User Group, HI
January 2013 issue, The TUG, www.the-tug.org, editor (at) the-tug.org

Because a number of you (I mean us) fall in the senior age group, and because some of you (I mean us) may be thought to lead a sheltered life, I thought it was time to offer to broaden your computer horizons.

So, I'm providing you with a laundry list of websites that you can visit and decide yourself if you want to bookmark them. It's never a disadvantage to be informed of what is happening in the world. News, opinions, human interest, goofy and technical sites are included.

There are innumerable websites on the internet covering every topic imaginable. Some are toxic to the sensibilities. Some are dedicated to historic events. Many are opinion sites that cover all topics from art, to comedy, to topical news, anything you can think of, you can find on the internet. All have their own interesting element.

I must admit, I have become addicted to visiting numerous sites every evening. I can't remember the last time I watched TV after 7 PM. I'm usually at the computer after dinner surfing through a favorite list of blogs, news and feel good sites. It's my way of taking a break from the dismal news events of the day but still keeping current.

At many of the blogs you can read the headline without clicking on through to a link. If the topic does not interest you, scroll down to the next entry. With the talking heads on TV you have to suffer through the narrative and the frequent commercials or press the mute button. At a blog you don't have that problem.

Many of the opinion sites report news items and then give you opinions from one, or more, contributors, whereas the TV news casts spend mere seconds on a topic before breaking for commercial and oftentimes have a one-sided slant to the item.

The really fun part of these is the comments section. Which, I must warn you, can get pretty salty, so be cautious. If profanity offends you, be especially careful. F-bombs are strewn throughout some of the comments. A few blog hosts prohibit foul language and you'll learn which ones if you check out the listings.

I've categorized them so you can see the genre and pass on those that you know won't interest you.

Opinions -- Far right; Left and Far left.
www.instapundit.com
www.politico.com
www.slate.com
www.rightwingnews.com
www.maggiesfarm.anotherdotcom.com/
www.huffingtonpost.com
www.twitchy.com—a compilation of tweets, and responses to them, from around the world.

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Fun stuff— Animals and satire
www.cuteoverload.com
www.rumfordmeteor.com
www.flixxy.com
www.top20sites.com/

Tech stuff— Computers mostly
www.docmercury.com
www.pcworld.com
www.cnet.com

Arts and Music
www.classical.net
www.classical.com
http://www.deviantart.com/
http://www.fineartsites.org/

Novels and manuscript
http://tinyurl.com/c4x5vpm— Cincinnati Library list of books
http://manuscriptsonline.wordpress.com/ (Research site)
http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/ - British Library

A few of the sites listed require registration but no membership fee unless you sign up for their 'premium' offerings. Quite a bit of the content is free to browse.

As Lou (Torraca) reminds us, be careful on the WWW while educating yourself.

Aloha,

Jim