TOGGLE

THE MICROCOMPUTER TURN (ON)

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER FOR TACOMA-SEATTLE AREA MICROCOMPUTERUSERS

Volume 32 Number 12 May 2012 Issue #348

IN THIS ISSUE

Special Announcement

See the Webmasters Report at the bottom of page 10 which says:
A new section has been added to the TOG webpage, ''Meeting Presentations''. A number of past presentations, mostly done in PowerPoint slides, have been posted to the TOG web page. Go to: http://www.toggle.org/htmlmeeting_presentations/presentation_index.htm

UPDATE

Communcations

In *Google Privacy Settings* the author gives advice on how to delete your history about visiting the many Google sites.

In *Getting Your Streaming Video On Your TV* the author gives advice on what hardware you need depending on how new your tv set is. The advice is mainly about capturing the TV sgnal on your PC. You also need an audio link but they are easily available.

In *Create A Free WiFi Hot-Spot With Your PC* the author describes a free program that will make any Windows 7 PC a WiFi hot spot which can then provide access to the internet to other PCs in the room or vicinity. This might be very useful at club meetings, if our normal wifi connection is not available. This program apparently will not work to make an XP machine a WiFi hot spot.

Operating System

In *Is Your Computer Running Slower and Slower?* the author suggests that you may have picked up unwanted baggage over time and says he has a professional clean up his machine when it slows down appreciably.

General Interest

In *MUSIC- Capture it, Organize it and Enjoy it - Part 1* the author briefly traces recorded music from early audio through high fidelity to today's digital formats.

In *MUSIC- Capture it, Organize it and Enjoy it - Part 2* the author says: ''Last month we discussed the History of digital music and how it is created. Now it's time to organize that Music and create a Music Folder so that it can be the repository of all the music you Rip, purchase, or convert from analog sources; basically your Music Library.''

In *Presidentially Speaking* the author sermonizes on what the terms paperless society and and wirless society really mean.

Hardware

In *Considerations for Choosing a Smart Phone* Sandy Berger gives us a run down on what phones offer and what to look for.

- In *Eyes Relax* the reviewer *says: ''*If you find yourself suffering from maladies related to sitting too long in one place or staring too long at a computer screen, then you should consider downloading and installing free Eyes Relax.'' She then lists the many things the program does.

- *In Shut down, Sleep, Hibernate - Which one, when and why?* the author tells us the difference between computer states On/Off, Sleep, Hibernate and Hybrid Sleep. Most of these conditions are taken care of for you, once selected, but it is worth knowing about them.

COMMUNICATIONS NOTES & TIPS

Google Privacy Settings

http://goo.gl/EMjQh from CNN.com

Don't sign in. This is the easiest and most effective tip.

Many of Google's services --most notably search, YouTube and Maps --don't require you to sign in to use them. If you're not logged in, via Gmail or Google+ , for example, Google doesn't know who you are and can't add data to your profile. But to take a little more direct action ...

Removing your Google search history

Eva Galperin of the Electronic Frontier Foundation has compiled a step-by-step guide **goo.gl/bsV4g** to deleting and disabling your Web History, which includes the searches you've done and the sites you've visited.

It's pretty quick and easy:
--Sign in to your Google account
--Go to www.google.com/history
--Click ''Remove all Web History''
--Click ''OK''

As the EFF notes, deleting your history will not prevent Google from using the information internally. But it will limit the amount of time that it's fully accessible. After 18 months, the data will become anonymous again and won't be used as part of your profile.

Six tips to protect your search privacy (from the EFF)

goo.gl/WnSc0

Clearing your YouTube history

Similarly, users may want to remove their history on YouTube. That's also pretty quick and easy.

– Sign in on Google's main page
– Click on ''YouTube'' in the toolbar at the top of the page
– On the right of the page, click your user name and select ''Video Manager''
– Click ''History'' on the left of the page and then ''Clear Viewing History''
– Refresh the page and then click ''Pause Viewing History''
– You can clear your searches on YouTube by going back and choosing ''Clear Search History'' and doing the same steps.

Clearing your browsing history on Google Chrome

– Click on the ''wrench'' icon at the far right of your toolbar
– Select ''Tools''
– Select ''Clear browsing data''
– In the dialogue box that appears, click the ''clear browsing data'' box (there are other options you may want to use as well)
– Select ''Beginning of Time'' to clear your entire browsing history
– Click ''clear browsing history''

Gmail Chat

When you start a chat with someone, you can make the conversation ''off the record.'' Off-the-record chats will not be stored in your chat history or the history of the person with whom you're talking. All chats with that person will remain off the record until you change the status. To go off the record:

– Click the '' Actions'' link at the top right of the chat window
– Scroll down to ''Go off the record.'' Both you and your chat partner will see that the chat has been taken off the record.

What are Google's other products?

Obviously, anything with ''Google'' in its name counts. But the Web giant owns other products that might not be so obvious to some folks.

– Gmail. Yes, the ''G'' is for Google.
– YouTube. Google bought the Web's leading video site in 2006
– Picasa. The online photo sharing site became Google's in 2004
-- Blogger. The blog publishing tool constributions of the SIG Leaders has been Google's since 2003. who have volunteered:
– FeedBurner. A management tool for bloggers and managing RSS feeds. Google bought it in 2007.
– Orkut. Google's original social-networking site isn't big in the U.S. But it's one of the most popular sites in India and Brazil.
– Android. Yes, you probably know this. But just for the record, Google owns the most popular smartphone operating system.

Getting Your Streaming Video On Your TV

by James McKittrick

Not too long ago we presented a main meeting session on watching television on your computer from TV network web sites and aggregator sites such as Hulu. It works rather well and enables you to watch shows you may have missed as well as other interesting and varied offerings. This is all well and good but sometimes you may want to watch a TV show right on your TV. This article will cover a few options to do just that.

If you have been around personal computers for twenty plus you may remember the Timex Sinclair. It was out before the IBM PC set the Windows standard and was a small unit that came without a monitor. The idea for the Timex Sinclair is that is was cheap (the keyboard had no real moveable keys but sort of stiff pictures of keys that you batted) and you could use your TV set for a monitor.

This was long before LED and other flat screen sets. The Timex Sinclair quickly faded into the never-never land of failed home computer concepts but the concept of using your TV as a monitor is still quite valid

If you have a new computer and new TV it is rather easy to connect PC to TV. Newer laptops have a video card with TV-

out. There are cards with composite (yellow RCA), S-video, and component (red, green and blue RCA) outputs for standard and ExtonPC.org News 3 component high definition TV's. If your TV has a digital HD input (DVI or HDMI), you can connect a DVI video card directly to the digital input. You just have to get the correct cable most often HDMI.

You can also get a PC to TV converter. These are perfect when you don't want to upgrade your video card (especially with laptops) The PC to TV converter connects the VGA out on your computer to composite, S-video, component or even high definition component. I have a Grandtec PC to Video Component. (www.grandtec.com). It's a small flat plastic box. It connects with a variety of included cables depending on your TV.

My older tube TV has the yellow S jack. It works very well. Not perfect but very watchable. This particular device was closed out recently by Radio Shack but you can find them online. The are priced in the $50 range. Other similar products are made by Sewell.

Unless you are a silent move fan you need another step. The PC to Video devices do not do audio. The easiest fix is a set of small free standing computer speakers which you just plug into your earphone jack on your laptop and you are good to go. These speakers vary in price but I found a very serviceable set for $10.

So for less than one months cable cost I have my homemade ''on demand ''and can watch shows like Covert Affairs and Pawn Stars.

From Exton PC.Org News March 2012 newsletter issue of the Exton PC Council.

Create A Free WiFi Hot-Spot With Your PC

by Ira Wilsker

As seen in April 2012 User Friendly. Los Angeles Computer Society Newsletter

I was recently doing one of my cyber security presentations at a professional meeting in a posh Dallas area hotel, and there was a need for several users to get online for research purposes. As the speaker, I had a hard-wired Ethernet connection allowing me to access the internet, but the available WiFi connections in the room were weak and slow, making it difficult for the others to connect to the internet. This was one of those situations where a common and inexpensive WiFi router connected to the available Ethernet cable would have sufficed, but no one had a WiFi router with them, as that is something that we typically do not carry in our computer bags. I remembered a column about a year ago in the Daily Buggle (***www.thedail:y:buggle.com/wifi-hotspot-free-windows-pc***) which explained how to use a modern WiFi capable Windows PC as a WiFi hotspot, without the use of any additional hardware. I searched for that article, found it, and in a matter of minutes, we were all connected to the internet using our laptops, netbooks, and smart phones.

Most recent versions of Windows include a little known feature called internet connection sharing (ICS), which is especially easy to set up and configure as an ad-hoc wireless network on Windows 7. When used with a freeware utility, Mhotspot (***www.mhotspot.com***), the internet connected laptop computer becomes a virtual WiFi router with no additional hardware, and no complicated software configuration. Once installed on the computer, the Mhotspot software does all of the work, and creates a WiFi hotspot without the use of complex configuration; Mhotspot is so simple that a single mouse click creates the hotspot.

The newly released version 4 of Mhotspot was released in February 2012, and is a fast 210 kb download, even though the website still shows it as version 3 (www.mhotspot.com/download.html). The Mhotspot software requires Windows 7, but being the skeptic I downloaded it to an XP laptop, and it would not install on the XP machine. Mhotspot ran flawlessly on my newer Windows 7 laptop.

The setup process was fast and simple, consisting of only two steps, without any intricate configurations. There is no traditional installation, as the program is ready to run when downloaded. First I had to choose a name for my hotspot, and then create a password with a minimum of eight characters. The Mhotspot window appeared offering the choice to start or stop the hotspot, or setup its properties. If a configuration is necessary, it is a ''one time'' event, and does not have to be repeated in order to use Mhotspot in the future. For those who may need visual instructions on downloading and running Mhotspot, there is a sequential set of graphical instructions on the Mhotspot web site at ***mhotspot.com/howto.html***, and a three minute YouTube video clearly demonstrates the process at (***www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y6ABC5QmTjs***).

Using the ''how to'' instructions on the Mhotspot website (www.mhotspot.com/howto.html), it took me about three minutes to download the software, run it, choose a hot-spot name and password, and set my internet connection to ''share''. As soon as it was ready, my audience could wirelessly access the internet using the hotspot name and password that I created. Fully cognizant that the more users sharing the available bandwidth, the less connection speed available to each, I was still able to demonstrate what I needed to show, and the participants were able to do what they needed to do. In the group that was sharing my hotspot was a small assortment of laptops, smart phones, and iPads, along with an obsolescent netbook. After I completed my session, I clicked on the ''Stop'' button on the Mhotspot window, and the hotspot was shut down.

Later in the day, during an impromptu get together, I was asked by a self-proclaimed geek how I made my laptop into a hotspot without using a WiFi router, which he doubted could be done. Since there was an available Ethernet connection, I plugged in my computer I clicked on the Mhotspot icon on my

desktop, clicked on the ''start'' button, gave him my hot-spot name and password, and in seconds he was connected to the internet wirelessly through my laptop without the use of a router! The Mhotspot had remembered all of my settings, and simply clicking on the icon and starting the utility, made my computer a hotspot again.

I can visualize several scenarios where Mhotspot on a Windows 7 computer can be useful. As happened recently in the Dallas hotel, there was only a single Ethernet connection available in the hotel room, and more than one of us wanted to access the internet at the same time; Mhotspot allowed us to do that. Similar arrangements can be made in classrooms, meeting rooms, and other places where people need to share internet access.

Somebody somewhere must have found a use for Mhotspot, as the CNet website, download.com, shows the Mhotspot software as the current #3 most popular downloaded ''Wireless Network Utility'', with over 154,000 copies downloaded, of which over 5700 copies were downloaded in the preceding week. Mhotspot has been reviewed and rated by several of the reputable software evaluation services, most giving Mhotspot their highest ratings. These rating services include ''Editors' Choice'' awards from Brothersoft and FreeWareFiles, and ''Excellent Ratings'' from Download3000 and FreeWindows. For those concerned with the safety of downloading software, Softpedia tested the download, and certified it with its '' 100% '' rating, indicating that it is totally free of any types of spyware, adware, or viruses.

The Mhotspot icon proudly sits on the desktop of my Windows 7 computer, ready to wirelssly share my internet connection on an instant's notice.

EMAIL: iwilsker@sbcglobal.net

Listen to my ''My Computer Show'' on NEWS TALK AM560 KLVI, now streaming on the ''net, MONDAYS, 6-7pm Central Time, KLVI.COM. READ my weekly computer and technology column in the EXAMINER, httQ:// www.theexaminer.com. Click on the ''CURRENT ISSUE'' image and scroll to my column.

OPERATING SYSTEM NOTES & TIPS

Is Your Computer Running Slower and Slower?

By Jim Cerney, Director, Sarasota PCUG, Florida
February 2012 issue, Sarasota PC Monitor
www.spcug.org jimcerny123 (at) gmail.com

If your computer is over two years old, have you noticed that it is taking longer to turn on (or boot-up as they say in computerese?) Do programs take longer to run? Are you getting lots of pop-up windows asking about things that you dont know anything about?

Well, it is normal for a computer to slow up with age and show some other symptoms of not being as quick as it was when it was new. The reasons for this are many. It is probably NOT because you downloaded 700 photos from your vacation to Newark. Certainly photos take up much more computer memory than documents and it does take more time to copy photos, but that is not an indication your computer is working more slowly. It more likely that you have a virus no virus protection program is perfect (have you noticed that they do not come with guarantees?).

And, over time, just using the internet opens the door to your computer for various things like ads, start-up programs, malware, cookies, and other things which find their way onto your computer without you knowing it. So, even keeping up your virus protection program, scanning your C: drive for problems, and doing other good computer maintenance does not mean you will be problem free. It happens to all of us.

Here is my advice (and I actually follow my own advice in this case). After two or three years when you notice your computer running more slowly, take it in to a technical expert to have it cleaned up and tuned up, just like you would have your car looked at for a maintenance or safety check.

I do NOT recommend that you download anything from the internet to clean-up your computer. A GOOD tech person will have all the latest and best tools (software) to scan your computer, they will also have lots of experience doing this for others. And you can talk to them to understand what they are going to do for you.

They know what to look for to find and eliminate any viruses that got through your protection program, eliminate unwanted programs, clean up your C: drive and get it running again like new. Of course you need to tell them what NOT to delete. Get a good estimate of the cost of this before you tell them to go ahead. It should take about one but no more than two hours of their time, unless you want something else done as well. So it should cost around $75 to $150 or so. If it is more than that, ask someplace else for another estimate.

When you get your computer back, it will be like, Wow, its like a new computer! But, in another year or two you will find that it will start getting slower again. Then, my friend, it is probably not worth the money to get it clean up a second time -- so it is best at that point to get a NEW computer!

GENERAL INTEREST

MUSIC-
Capture it, Organize it and Enjoy it - Part 1

Phil Sorrentino, President (at) spcug.org
Sarasota PCUG, FLJUL '10 PC Monitor www .spcug .org
Reprinted in March 2012 USER FRIENDLY -The Los Angeles Computer Society Newsletter

Music in the past was captured and made available on analog sources and played back on analog devices. Those analog sources were cylinders (in Thomas Edison's times), record disks (78s, 45s and 33 1/3 vinyl), and finally tapes (reel-to-reel, 8 track, and cassette). And they were played on a phonograph (circa late 1870s), a turntable (spanning the 20th century) or a tape machine (spanning the late 20th century). All those devices were engineered to convert the analog music on the source media to sound that eventually hit our ears. Analog music was the capture of some sort of wiggle, like the wiggle of a turntable needle or stylus, or the wiggle of a magnetic field on a magnetic tape. The quality of the music we experienced improved all along the time that analog music was available, finally culminating in High Fidelity, Stereophonic Sound. Stereophonic because there are two tracks, one for the right and one for the left, to match the hearing mechanisms on our head, one on the right and one on the left. High Fidelity is the property of reproducing all of the music frequencies that were originally produced by the original source, like a singer's voice, or a rock and roll band, or a symphony orchestra. The frequency response of the human ear is about 20 Hz to around 16,000 Hz (although sometimes it is stated as 20 to 20k). These are general ranges and as we age, the lower limit tends to rise and the upper limit tends to be lowered. (By the way, if someone is exposed to very high intensity sounds or noises {measured in decibels}, their hearing range could be affected. In fact, sounds greater than somewhere around 100 decibels {db} can produce permanent damage to one's hearing range.) So, High Fidelity Stereo was developed to deliver two channels, each with about a 20 to 16,000 Hz frequency range. What more could you ask for. (Well, actually now with digital reproduction you can have much more, like 5.1 surround sound, but that is a subject for another time.)

Enough of the past, now on to the digital music age. One of the differences between analog and digital sources of music is the fact that with an analog source, the music quality deteriorates with each play. Each time a record or tape is played, some of the range of the music is lost. But with digital sources (digital files), the quality always remains the same. Go ahead and play away. The reason for this is that the digital representation for music is just a series of ones and zeros (which is reproduced exactly with every Copy). As long as that series is reproduced (and the process that interprets the ones and zeros doesn't change), then the results, the music, will always be the same. So, once we get the music, we have it at that quality, for good. But how is digital music created? What is the source? And what devices are used to reproduce it.

The recording process starts with (analog) microphones which produce a small analog signal. This signal is amplified and then digitized. From this point on everything is digital, therefore perfectly reproducible. Digitization produces a file that has been engineered to contain the complete audible frequency range. This is the .wav file that is on the CD that is purchased. The CD becomes the source for the music. (Today, most music is distributed on CDs, although more and more music is being downloaded to computers for eventual listening.) Typically there are about 15 songs on a CD, but with the capacity of a CD (700 MB) and the average size of a song (35MB), you might get as many as 20 or 21 songs on a CD. So, if CDs are the source of the music, a CD player is the device that is used to reproduce the music. CD players come in two basic varieties, stereo cabinet type to be used with a stereo system maybe in the family room, and portables for use on the go. Some larger stereo cabinet models can hold as many as 400 CDs and provide a place to store all the CDs (without their cases). Now that's how the digital music is produced, distributed, and played, but what about MP3s? Well, an MP3 file is the result of processing a WAV file with an MP3 conversion program, the product of which is much smaller than the original. (WMA is another file type similar to MP3 that has been introduced and used by Microsoft.) MP3 files are typically one tenth the size of the corresponding WAV file.

The resultant file size can vary because there are settings used by the MP3 conversion program. The MP3 conversion process is a ''Lossy'' conversion, that is, some of the quality can be lost in the conversion. The quality is selected by choosing a bit rate for the conversion. For music this rate typically goes from 128 kbps (considered near CD quality) up to around 320 kbps (for those audiophiles that have very good hearing and reproduction systems). There are also lower qualities for low frequency range (voice only) , files which are 32 kbps and 64 kbps. The lower the quality, the smaller the size of the MP3 file, and similarly, the higher the quality, the larger the file size. Some people might be able to detect the difference between a 128 kbps quality and a 320 kbps quality, but if you cannot then the smaller file would be a better choice. (If you're not sure if you can detect the difference, create an MP3 of one of your favorite CDs at two different bit rates and then play each one and see if you can tell the difference. If you can tell the difference, use the higher bit rate as your quality setting.)

So, with that bit of background, we are able to discuss the process of converting songs on a CD to MP3 files. This process is called Ripping a CD. (Don't blame me, I didn't name it.) The process does nothing like its name implies, it simply converts the W A V file on the CD to an MP3 file on the computer, at the chosen quality. Ripping can be done with many programs like Windows Media Player, Musicmatch Jukebox, Audacity, and Winamp. (Windows Media Player (WMP) which comes with all Windows Operating Systems

will be used here in examples.) To Rip a CD, place the CD in the CD/DVD reader/writer tray, start WMP, and click Rip on the top Selection Bar. It's that easy. A list of the files on the CD will be shown with a checked check box for each. If you don't want one of the songs, uncheck the box. When the conversion is finished you will have an MP3 file for each of the checked songs. Typically, the MP3 files will be in a Folder with the name of the CD Album, within a Folder for the Artist within the folder that was setup as the Rip Folder. From this folder, you can move or copy the songs to a library folder. Most people will probably use the Music (or My Music) folder that is part of Windows for this.

Next month we'll discuss organizing the Library to take advantage of the fruits of your (possibly) considerable labor in creating the music files. And don't forget: backup all that music regularly, so you don't have to go through that process again.

MUSIC - Capture it, Organize it and Enjoy it -Part 2

Phil Sorrentino president (at) spcug.org
Sarasota PCUG, FL AUG ' 10 PC Monitor www.spcug.org
Reprinted in April 2012 USER FRIENDLY -The Los Angeles Computer Society Newsletter

Last month we discussed the History of digital music and how it is created. Now it's time to organize that Music and create a Music Folder so that it can be the repository of all the music you Rip, purchase, or convert from analog sources; basically your Music Library .There are many ways of organizing the Music folder with sub folders. Before we do that it is probably worth a review of the data that is kept with each music file to see if it can be of any use in determining the organization of these folders. What data? you say. Well along with the actual music, in each music file, there is data that describes the music part of the file. This type of data is called metadata.

So, metadata is data that describes other data (in this case the music). The music metadata is called ID3 Tag Data and is defined by the ID3v2 specification. ID3 Tag Data includes descriptive items such as: title, artist, album, track number, genre, year, copyright, stereo, length, composer, rating, etc., as well as album cover art graphics. ID3 Tag Data is created when the original MP3 data file is created. The ID3 Tag Data is not easily modified unless you use an ID3 Tag Editor like MP3Tag, which was discussed in the March 2010 issue of the Monitor. (In short, MPETag allows the user to modify the ID3 Tag Data that is created along with the MP3 file when a tune is initially created, or ripped from a CD.) The reason that ID3 Tag Data is important is because Music players, like Windows Media Player (WMP) and iTunes use the ID3 Tag Data to organize and present your music library .

A music tune will show up according to the ID3 Tag Data, which may not be where you think it should show up if you are only looking at the file name. This will probably not be a problem if all of your tunes come from CDs or are downloaded, but if you convert any from vinyl or tape to MP3, the ID3 Tag Data may not be what you think it should be. Also, if you want to change where particular artists show up, you might have to change the ID3 Tag Data for that artist. Some CD compilations of tunes have the artist as ''Various Artists'', which will put that tune under ''V'', probably not where you would expect to find it. So, it's good to have an ID3 Tag Editor so you can make any changes to the ID Tag Data to put the tunes in the places you want them. Once the tunes that need changes to the ID3 Tag Data are changed, the library will be presented as you expected, typically artists or songs alphabetically arranged, although, you can also view the library based on other items such as Genre, Album, Year, or even Rating. Rating is a number that you give to a tune, typically one to five. The Rating can then help you find a tune or present a specific view of your music library. (For example, you could show all the tunes with a rating of 4 or better .)

So the ID3 Tag Data determines how the music library will be presented, but we still may want to organize the underlying folders for convenience. This is not necessary, but it might allow the music to be viewed easily (using Windows Explorer), without using a Music Player. When CDs are Ripped, they are put into folders for the Artist, with the Album being a subfolder.

You might continue this and just put all the Artist folders into a Music folder. Then, it would be easy to find any tune with just the Artist and Album names. This is in general a very good way to organize your Music Folder. The only difficulties that might arise are those associated with converted tapes and disks, but you will just have to see how best they can each fit into your overall scheme. A simpler, but less desirable scheme might be just one Music Folder with every tune included. The tunes would then be alphabetically arranged by the file name. This can lead to one very big file, but for small Music Libraries, this may be acceptable. You could even create separate music Folders for specific music genres, like Music-Big Band, Music-Country , Music-Pop; it's really your choice.

Playlists are next. Now that we have a Folder organization for our Music Folder, we can take advantage of that organization to find tunes to include in Playlists. Playlists are just as you would expect, they are lists of tunes to Play, without any manual intervention. Playlists can include as many tunes as you would like, only limited by the number of tunes in your library.You could easily create a playlist that would last all day. Playlist files are another file type. The original playlist file type is M3U. WMP can be set to use M3U but prefers another Microsoft file type, WPL. M3U has a very simple file structure which is just a text list of files. WPL is a little more complex and probably a little more capable and written in HTML.

Both work fine and it is impossible to tell which is being used without looking at the file types. If you have no reason to prefer one over the other, use your Music Player's default

type. (Either file can be modified using Notepad, not Wordpad or Word, if necessary. Notepad is a simple text editor that does not include any formatting information.)

This should not be undertaken lightly. Modifying a file with a text editor should only be done with great caution, and only by a person who is confident of the file structure. An error in the file structure may make the file non-useable, so do this only if absolutely necessary .Once you have decided on the Playlist file type, or just accepted to use the default, you can start to create Playlists. Just think of a theme and then find all the tunes that support that theme. Using WMP, playlists are easily created by showing the Library in any view, such as by Artist, and then dragging-and-dropping the tunes for the Playlist over to the Playlist pane on the right side of the screen. After you have all the tunes in the list, give it a name and save it and that's all there is to it. While you're at it you might want to create a Playlist for each Artist so that you can review all of the tunes for that specific artist. In this case, the artist is the theme. You might even like this playlist for ''an evening with a Sinatra, or Elvis, or the Beatles''.

Now you're ready to take advantage of all that music entertainment, laboriously stored in the Music Folders. One last item to consider is using your music on other machines on your network. If you don't have a home network now, you probably will in the future. For simplicity and convenience it makes sense to have only one Music Folder, kept on your main computer (acting as a Music Server), and to use it on every other machine on your network. This way there is only one Music Folder to be backed-up. WMP can easily be set up for Sharing Media. Select Tools- Library -Configure Sharing. .., and check the Share Media check box. Then choose the devices, on the network, to Allow sharing of music. This will allow other machines to use the media in the Server's Music Library. By the way, all of the music in your Music Library can also be used on any of the portable MP3 music players, like Apple's iPod or SanDisk's Clip. WMP provides the ability to ''Sync'' your music to a portable device. Briefly, to share a Playlist, plug your device into a USB port and choose Sync on the Selection Bar, choose the playlist and select Sync. (Obviously, the memory in the portable device must be large enough to hold all the tuned in the playlist.)

Recorded music is only about 133 years old if we consider Edison's invention in 1877 as its practical beginning. (There were earlier patents on devices that could record but not playback the recording.) Recorded music has come a long way from Edison's time to the present when almost any recorded music can be obtained and stored indefinitely on our personal computers, and then played and shared almost effortlessly. The computer, besides all of its other jobs, can be a great music entertainment center. If you haven't started yet, what are you waiting for? Get started creating your own Music Library so you and your family can enjoy the fruits of the past 133 years and your current efforts.

Presidentially Speaking

by Bob Dooley, Bobflfl (at) juno.com
BPCA, FL, JAN ' II BPCA News

Are you as confused as I am? I mean, about the way the world is turning, sometimes? We read and heard about the ''paperless'' society and now everything is ''wireless'' - we are in a ''wireless'' society. That's it! Paperless and wireless. Everything!

If that is so, then why is my place full of wires and jampacked with filing cabinets bulging with folders stuffed with paper? Why does my mailbox fill up daily with paper stuff? Paper everywhere. Papers to file and paper to save and paper to burn. A weekly chore is to empty wastebaskets filled with. ..? You guessed it...paper. For my phone service I use a VOIP (Voice Over Internet Protocol) service -and have for years. It eliminated the use of the telephone line from Bell (or whatever name they go by today) but the wires still are in my walls from the poles to my place. And the wires in the walls to distribute by VOIP service to the other rooms is still in use. And, I guess, you can call the cable from Comcast a ''wire'' as it delivers the Internet used by my VOIP. And, I have two wireless phones, but they must be returned to their wired base-stations for regeneration - regularly. Then there is the wire to my modem and the wire to the router. Then there are wires to deliver power to everything in the place including the modem and the router. Why write this today? Well this month (November) I bought a new ''wireless'' printer (HP }4680, to be exact). It was to replace my old ''all-in-one'' (not really, since it had no fax function, but they still called it that and they still do) Epson printer and an even older Panasonic fax machine. It was to join my wireless Ikeyboard and wireless mouse and my wireless Internet server.

Starting at the beginning, the first part of installation is to plug in the power cord (translated ''wire'') and then connect the USB cable (translated ''wire''). Once the new device is recognized by the computer the USB cable can be disconnected leaving only one wire attached - the power cord.

It should be noted that the wireless keyboard and mouse, while not connected to the computer, nevertheless require a ''wire'' - the USB station to pick up their signals. Even with all this wireless stuff, behind my computer there is a tangled mess of wires.

Most computers are the same way, such that a recent NY Times Crossword Puzzle had the word ''tangle'' as the answer to the clue ''Cords behind a computer, often. '' And, of course, why did I need a ''printer?''

Who could possibly need a printer in a ''paperless'' society? I mean, it really won't print on anything else! Photo paper is still paper and envelopes are paper. It won't handle any other kind of media such as cardboard, glass or metal. And, the printer machine companies rate their machines on the ''PPM'' - pages per minute -how fast can they spew out the documents.

Having written all of this, am I angry , sad, disappointed,

even unhappy. No, not in the least. My new machine is really great and producing many paper pages. Being wireless means that without touching a single thing I can use it fully from either of my two desk PC's or my laptop (no matter which room in my place I use the laptop).

So, why the article? To bring attention to the fact that we are not, really either a ''paperless'' nor a ''wireless'' society and maybe never be -at least it will most likely be a very long while.

Who wishes electric currents whizzing wirelessly through the air and who doesn't wish to have some ascertainment of transactions and statements and communications?

HARDWARE NOTES & TIPS

Considerations for Choosing a Smart Phone

by Sandy Berger, Compukiss
www.compukiss.com sandy@compukiss.com
as seen in April 2012 BCUG Bytes

''Windows Mobile cell phones are just coming of age and they may well be a good choice in the future.''

There are so many different smartphones available today that choosing between them can be difficult. Each phone and each operating system has many different pluses and minuses. So today, I'll give you a brief rundown of what you can expect in a smartphone.

Windows Mobile cell phones are just coming of age and they may well be a good choice in the future. However, right now the choice will probably come down to choosing between the Apple iPhone and one of the many Android phones that are now available.

The Android operating system is upgraded several times a year and new Android phones are released all the time. Apple, however, only releases a new iPhone and a big update to their iOS operating system once a year. The new iPhone and iOS updates were released in October.

I have installed Apple's new iOS 5 operating system on my iPad, so I have been able to take an in-depth look at most of the new features. Now I am ready to make my list of the benefits of each.

There is no doubt that the camera on the new iPhone is superior to almost all the Android phone cameras. The retina screen on the iPhone is superior to most Android phones. The exception is the Samsung line of phones with AMOLED screens that rival the clarity and crispness of the iPhone screen.

Apple's new iCloud service will automatically back up your iPhone to Apple's servers and let you sync your iPhone, iPad, and Mac computer. While using iCloud is easier than some of the Android syncing and backup solutions, there were things that I didn't like about iCloud. For instance, you can't actually see your data in the Cloud as you can with solutions like Amazon's or Google's online storage.

One of Apple's biggest features is iTunes and the iTunes store. iTunes makes getting music and video on your iPhone easier than any Android application that I've seen. At this time, both the Android Marketplace and the iTunes App Store have hundreds of thousands of apps. The iTunes App Store, however, makes it easier to find the apps that you want. Also because of Apple's stricter app reviews, Apple's apps are more secure. However, the Android Marketplace has a higher percentage of free apps.

Some of the new features on Apple's new iPhone are already available on Android phones. The most prominent of these is the Notification Center that Apple just added. This is a feature of Android that has been around for a long time and that I love. Now in either operating system, you can just swipe your finger down from the top of the phone to see all of your alerts, notifications, incoming messages, and incoming email.

The most unique feature of the new iPhone is Siri, a personal assistant who will answer verbal questions that you ask. This would, no doubt, be very useful, entertaining, and truly state-of-the-art.

Android phones also have voice capabilities. They use Google's Voice Search. Most screens that pop up a keypad for text entry also have a small microphone. Just press the microphone and speak. It is amazingly accurate and you can use it for everything from entering email text, to searching, to navigating to a point on the map. Probably not as sophisticated as Apple's Siri, but it works well.

Android phones also have some things that I love that are not available on iPhones. The first of these is the fact that you can get a larger screen size on an Android. All iPhones currently have a 3.5-inch screen. Several good Android phones have 4.3-inch screens. My aging eyes really like the larger screens.

I also like the four buttons on the bottom of the Android screen. These are very, very useful. There is a Back Key, a Menu Key, a Home Key, and a Search Key. They are always available. They do not change when the screen changes. The iPhone has just one button. Some will argue that this makes the phone easier to use. Yet, this is not always the case. In some applications it is impossible to go back a screen. In others there is an on-screen back button but the location of this button varies with each application. With Android, you can always go back to the previous screen with just one press.

The Android operating system also is more customizable. With Apple, you are restricted to small square app icons. With Android you can use many different resizable widgets as well as the standard apps. All of this gives you many different customization options, but also adds to the complexity of the phone. With the iPhone you don't get so many choices. This makes it a bit more restrictive, but also makes it easier to use.

One other difference is that most Android phones have user-replaceable batteries, while an iPhone battery must be

replaced by Apple at a greater cost. While this might not be important to the average user, it may make a difference to a heavy-duty user.

Well, there are just a few of the pluses and minuses you will have to assess when you buy a new smartphone. Don't worry, though; it is hard to make a bad decision as almost all the smartphones on the market today are both capable and useful.

EYES RELAX

Review by Linda Hollman, member CCOKC, phefoil-srnet@yahoo.com

If you find yourself suffering from maladies related to sitting too long in one place or staring too long at a computer screen, then you should consider downloading and installing free Eyes Relax. Upon the recommendation of Kim Komando, I tried it. Admittedly, I set the options so that I could easily ignore it when I want to, and I often do. However, it has also motivated me to more often force myself to get up and do something different for at least a few minutes when the screen turns black and a picture (of my choosing) appears.

Eyes Relax offers several options, but yet it remains simple enough for anyone to use.

1) It lets you choose the length of the time you will work before a break.
2) It allows you to choose the amount of time you will break.
3) It offers options for both short breaks and long breaks. For instance, you can set short breaks to occur every 15 minutes and last for 60 secondsjust long enough to do a few stretching or other exercises, get a quick drink or snack, etc. Then you can set it to take a long break of 10 minutes after 4 short breaks.
4) You have the option to use a password. This way a child (or yourself if you cant remember the password) cannot over ride the break instructions.
5) You also have the option to be given the option to cancel the break.
6) You can tell the program to be intuitive and to stop counting when you stop working. So if you stop to answer a phone call or leave your desk for some reason, your time between breaks has not been used up.
7) It allows you to choose what will happen when its time for a break:
   a) A gentle reminder dialog box
   b) A blank screen of your choice of colors
   c) An image of your choosing
   d) A slideshow of your choosing
8) It gives you the options of receiving a reminder before the break and formatting it.
9) It gives you sound options for reminders, breaks and break ends.

The system tray icon gives you clues of where you are at with your sessiona bar changes colors as your break nears its end. And if you hover your pointer over it, it will tell you precisely how much time you have until your next break and whether it is a short or long one.

Right-clicking on the icon gives you several options such as, taking a break now, adding 5 minutes, or disabling Eyes Relax altogether, as well as checking for updates.

There are some other options and perhaps even other features Ive failed to mention. This is a great little program you should consider adding to your computer if you suffer from eye strain, eye-fatigue or stress headaches, neck aches, back aches, or any of the numerous other aches that can occur due to computing too long.

Of course, considering we are the most litigious society on earth, I would be remiss to not say I make no promise of any kind concerning suitability, applicability, usability, or safety of this or any program I review.

Eyes Relax 0.86 for W7, XP & Vista.
Portable version available.
http://themech.net/eyesrelax/

Shut down, Sleep, Hibernate - Which one, when and why?

Phil Sorrentino, President, Sarasota PCUG, FL, Nov 2011 issue, Sarasota PC Monitor, www.spcug.org, president (at) spcug.org

Shut-down is pretty straight forward, it removes power from your computer and ensures that the next time the power is turned on, the computer will go through the normal ''boot up'' process. Sleep and Hibernate are different and are ''Powered Down'' modes. The reason for using one of these powered down modes will differ depending on the type of computer, desktop or laptop, and the need to quickly get back to the operating mode after a pause in operation. Power usage, though always important, is mostly a consideration when using a laptop. How much operating time, before the batteries must be recharged, can be a big consideration for a laptop user. It can determine how useful the computer may be on a long flight, or how many movies the kids can watch on a crosscountry road trip. Even with desktops, the increased cost of electricity can become a key factor for customers who are under pressure to manage their total cost of ownership (purchase price plus operating expenses).

The hardware that makes up today's laptops has gotten quite efficient and the Windows Operating System software's ability to manage that hardware's power usage has constantly been improved. One of the biggest improvements since the early 1990's has been the addition of these power down modes, to help provide longer battery life.

Improvements in battery technology has greatly increased battery capacity as well as battery lifetime. Besides improvements in battery technology, the Operating System control over the hardware can also improve the battery life. A job for the Operating System is to make the system as efficient as

possible while still maintaining an acceptable user experience when turning the system on and off. (With the advent of Solid State Devices, in place of disk drives, we will eventually get to a very fast on and off experience. You can actually have it now, but it is very costly. By the way, try a tablet PC and see how fast it turns on and off; no moving parts in a tablet PC.)

The Windows 7 power management goals are simple:

1) make turning a computer off/on as reliable, simple, and fast as turning a TV off/on, and

2) maximize the battery usage if on battery, and reduce the energy consumption if on A/C power.

The first goal involves changing the model for what ''off'' and ''on'' really mean. By now, most everyone knows that turning a TV off doesn't really turn it off. It is still available to receive the remote control signal, so that it can come back on quickly. To the degree possible, ''off'' is really ''sleep'', in Windows. When a PC goes into the sleep mode, the system state is saved in RAM; part of that 2 or 3 Gigabytes typically available in modern PCs. This arrangement creates the best balance between speed of resuming operation, and lowest power usage.

Currently, Windows 7 defines threepower-down modes:

Sleep - a power-saving state that allows a computer to quickly resume full-power operation (typically within several seconds) when you want to start working again. Putting your computer into the sleep state is like pausing a DVD player the computer immediately stops what it's doing and is ready to start again when you want to resume working.

Hibernate - a power-saving state designed primarily for laptops. While sleep puts your work and settings in memory and draws a small amount of power, Hibernation puts your open documents and programs on your hard disk, and then turns off your computer. Of all the power-saving states in Windows, hibernation uses the least amount of power. On a laptop, use hibernation when you know that you won't use your laptop for an extended period and won't have an opportunity to charge the battery during that time.

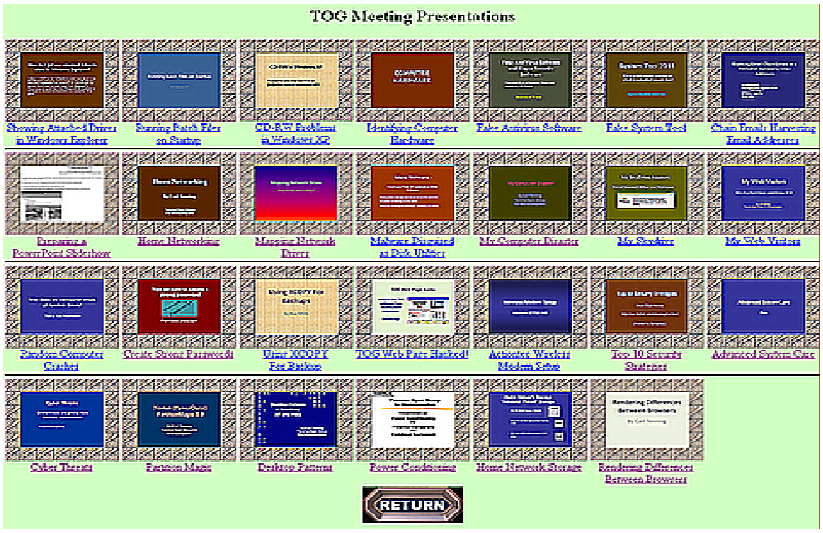
Hybrid Sleep - is designed primarily for desktop computers, is a combination of sleep and hibernate it puts any open documents and programs (the system state) into memory and onto your hard disk (so nothing can be lost if power goes out), and then puts your computer into a low-power state so that you can quickly resume your work.

That way, if a power failure occurs, Windows can restore your work from your hard disk. Normally, when the user returns and ''wakes'' the machine, the system state is just restored from RAM, and the responsiveness to the user is fast. However, if for some reason power is lost (for example, if the PC is unplugged to move it - like you might move your TV), the system can still resume from the system state previously saved to disk with all context and data intact. (When Hybrid Sleep is turned on, putting your computer into sleep automatically puts your computer into Hybrid Sleep. Hybrid Sleep is typically turned on by default on desktop computers.) While Hybrid Sleep can be used on a laptop computer, it isn't as applicable. A desktop is vulnerable to power loss, while a laptop can, of course, run on its internal battery. So, although there is a lot going on to produce and provide the power down modes, there really isn't much to think about. For desktops, let it go into, or select, sleep (which should be hybrid sleep) and for laptops take advantage of hibernate (your battery will thank you).

Webmasters Report

by Carl Tenning

A new section has been added to the TOG webpage, ''Meeting Presentations''. A number of past presentations, mostly done in PowerPoint slides, have been posted to the TOG web page. Go to: ***http://www.toggle.org/htmlmeeting_presentations/presentation_index.htm***



Editor's Note:
I know you can't read this chart but it is included here to show you what you will see when you go online and enter the website

Help Lines

HARDWAREHELP	Advisor No.
Reformat Hard Disk, FDISK	2,4,5
Install Hard Drive, CD-ROM/RW	2,4,5
Install Video Card	7
Partitioning Hard Drives	2
Internet/Intranet	6,7
Audio Cards	4
MPs Files, WMA Files, WAV Files	3,4
Burning CD's	3,5
Homesite	7
Net Objects	7

SOFTWAREHELP	Advisor No.
Win 95/98/ME/2K/NT/XP	2,3,4,7
Win 7	4,7
Microsoft Word	2,7
Microsoft Excel	4
Microsoft PowerPoint	4
WordPerfect	1,7
Norton/Symantec AntiVirus	2,3,6,7
Norton System Works	2,7
CompuPic / CompuPic Pro	3,7
Winzip, WinRAR	6
Ccleaner	3,4
Outlook, Outlook Express	2
Internet Explorer	2,7
RegSeeker	3,5
Instant Messaging	2
Installing Software after Reformatting	5
Deleting Files; Wiping	6

ADVISORS

Name	Phone	Hours
[1] Fred Shelton	(253)752-0120	Variable
[2] Bob Henkel	(253)537-6732	8A-8P any day
[3] Tom Stepanek	(253)922-7939	7-9P Mon-Fri
[4] Carl Tenning	(206)824-3843	6-9P Mon-Fri
[5] Oclad Wesley	(253)212-0352	6-9P
[6] Bob Thomson	(253)752-5582	Variable
[7] Ray Mills	(360)692-7568	6-9P Mon-Sat

Meeting Presentations Currently Posted on the TOG Web Page

http://www.toggle.org/htmlmeeting_presentations/presentation_index.htm

1.Showing Attached Drives in Windows Explorer
2. Running Batch Files on Startup
3. CD-RW Problems in Windows XP
4. Identifying Computer Hardware
5. Fake Antivirus Software
6. Fake System Tool
7. Chain Emails Harvesting Email Addresses
8. Preparing a PowerPoint Slideshow
9. Home Networking
10. Mapping Network Drives
11. Malware Disquised as Disk Utilities
12. My Computer Disaster
13. My Skydrive
14. My Web Visitors
15. Random Computer Crashes
16. Create Strong Passwords
17. Using XCOPY For Backup
18. TOG Web Page Hacked!
19. Actiontec Wireless Modem Setup
20. Top 10 Security Strategies
21. Advanced System Care
22. Cyber Threats
23. Partition Magic
24. Desktop Patterns
25. Power Conditioning
26. Making a Presentation
27. Rendering Differences Between Browsers
28. Switching From DSL to Clear Wireless
29. Home Network Storage
30. Networking USB Hard Drives

Tacoma Open Group for Microcomputers (TOG)
New Member Application/Existing Member Change of Address Form

For **Tacoma Open Group** annual membership, send form (if needed) & **$25** to Bob Henkel., 10613 25th Avenue E., Tacoma, WA 98445.
Make checks payable to TOG

Please print or type. Date:_____ Sponsored by:_____

Member's Name:_____

Address: _____

City:_____ State:_____ Zipcode:_____Plus Four _____ Country: _____

Home Phone: (____) _____ Work phone: (____) _____ E-Mail Address _____

TACOMA MEETING

When: **Mon 14 may 2012 -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.

Future Dates: 2nd Monday of Month

TOG BOARD MEMBERS

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

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

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

This will be a regular monthly meeting. Meeting discussions are always interesting and the ever-popular Q&A (Question & Answer) period is sure to pique your interest, come up to your expectations and tickle your fancy. Come and share your own experiences, problems and discoveries.

Carl Tenning will give a presentation called: **"Rendering Differences Between Browsers"** All browsers do not render web pages exactly the same. We will show differences between Internet Explorer, Mozilla Firefox, Google Chrome, Apple Safari, and Opera.