

# Bits of Bytes

Newsletter of the Pikes Peak Computer Application Society, Colorado Springs, CO

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## The Prez Sez

by John Pearce, President, P\*PCompAS

Were you affected by the eBay security breach? Or the Yahoo breach? Bob Blackledge has an audio-only presentation by Steve Gibson on "Password Haystack" and some of his security related tools for the May meeting.

See you at the meeting on June 7th. ☺



## Meeting Minutes

by Toni Logan, Secretary, P\*PCompAS

The 3 May 2014 meeting was called to order at 9 am by Vice-President Bob Blackledge in the absence of President John Pearce. He reminded us that coffee is free for first-time visitors and a donation for the rest of us. He also said that the coffee is from Laura at Starbucks and any time you are in the vicinity, stop and thank her.

The minutes of the last meeting as published in the newsletter were approved by motion. The Treasurer's report by Dennis Conroy was that we have a total of \$6740.83 in the treasury, which included a dividend of \$0.48; one dues membership of \$24.00, a gift to the church of \$322.87, and was filed for audit.

## Next P\*PCompAS meeting: Saturday, 7 June 2014

VP Bob Blackledge will play a Steve Gibson audio presentation on security and introduce us to SuperGenPass.

Editor Greg Lenihan had several copies of the newsletter for anyone who wants one and he reported that the deadline for the next newsletter was Saturday, May 24, 2014. Please get your articles to him by that date.

Hospitality co-chair Pat Krieger asked that in order to keep the club growing, that each of us bring a friend and in lieu of that, please do not die or move away.

There was no report from the Library, Media Rep, or Board of Directors.

APCUG Rep Joe Nuvolini said that there was an online conference starting at 11 am on this date, which would be difficult for us to participate in. He also mentioned that the website photo and newsletter contest was on again. Last year John Pearce entered our website and newsletter in the contest.

Bob Blackledge said that it was a little early for the nominating committee to report, but keep it in mind for the future. We need candidates to keep the club viable.

## OLD BUSINESS

Last month two motions were made and passed concerning the Kitchen Aid purchase for the Church. Only one was acted on, so we needed to clean up the other motion. Either amend the first motion or rescind it. A motion was made by Gene Bagenstos and seconded to rescind the first motion. The motion passed.

## NEW BUSINESS

The next regular meeting will be held on Saturday, June 7, at the Community Church at 9 am. The business meeting was adjourned.

## AROUND THE ROOM

The audio of the May meeting is on the PPCOMPAS website at <https://app.box.com/s/p93vqq73asxhau99ya27>.

## PROGRAM

The program consisted of several short Lynda.com videos which included the topics: Faster home Wi-Fi and monitoring your online reputation from Google.

## DRAWING

Backpack—Dennis Conroy  
Antenna rabbit ears—Paul Godfrey  
FM Wireless Microphone—Bob Blackledge  
Laser Printer—Pete DeMario ☺

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## *Nybbles and Bits* by John Pearce, P\*PCompAS

My wife and I decided to take our Pacific Coast Highway vacation in conjunction with a wedding reception in Sacramento, CA. We gave the in-car GPS quite a work out on the trip. Overall, it did quite well. My experience with free wi-fi in the hotels where we stayed was varied and interesting.

The GPS worked well although having updated map data for your GPS is important. The map data in our car is three years old. In one case, the GPS showed a highway as a two-lane road but it had been upgraded to a four-lane divided highway. That affected the GPS's initial time estimate. There were a few other things, but none of which created problems for us.

We used the "find nearest" feature of the GPS at various places to locate stores like Target, Walgreens, Red Robin and Taco Bell. However, the GPS had the wrong information on the Evergreen Aviation and Space Museum in McMinnville, OR. The GPS's directions took us into a residential area about five miles from our actual destination. I don't know if updated map data would have avoided this problem or not. The aviation museum has been at its current location for over ten years.

Every place we stayed had free wi-fi. It worked better in some places than others. Many places apparently used Matrix Networks for their wi-fi service. The Matrix Networks name was prominently displayed on the screen where you entered the password and accepted their terms and conditions before



getting Internet access. All of the access points I used on the trip showed as "open" in scanning. The password, if one was required, controlled user access, not security. Fortunately, Windows 7 popped up a reminder that the connection was unsecured. None of the nine hotels where we stayed provided a secure connection, i.e., no WPA or WEP. For secure Internet connections, we used the cellular data service on our cell phones.

Most hotels had a little slip of paper they handed out at check-in with the wi-fi password but not the SSID. The SSIDs didn't always make sense and the desk clerks were not always knowledgeable about the wi-fi setup. For example, one hotel used SSL, SSL1, and SSL2. In another case there were several "open" access points with good signal strength and each of them had a completely different SSID. I had no idea which of them belonged to the hotel and neither did the desk clerk. I had a really good laugh at one hotel. The desk clerk handed me the slip of paper with the wireless password printed in bold and he said "Be sure to enter it in bold or it won't work." I managed to avoid laughing until I left the office. ☺

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P\*PCompAS welcomes any comments, letters, or articles from members and non-members alike. Please send any articles to the editor (see last page for address). The editor reserves the right to reject, postpone, or edit for space, style, grammar, and clarity of any material submitted.

Since Microsoft has discontinued support for Windows XP, security holes in Internet Explorer 8 used by XP would no longer be fixed. It was therefore recommended that XP users use an alternate Web browser and set it as their default browser. If you use Chrome, you can set it as your default browser by selecting the three bar customizing icon at the top right corner of the Chrome screen. Next click on Settings and page down to the Default browser window and click on "Make Google Chrome the default browser." That should do it. If you use Firefox, click on Tools, then Options, and then the Advanced tab. In the System Defaults window, click on the Check Now box and set Firefox as the default browser. No need to explain how to set Internet Explorer as your default browser as that's what we are trying to avoid. By the way, if you have created Website shortcuts with Internet Explorer or Firefox, they will now launch in the default browser.

Regarding the above, Microsoft caved and released KB2964358, a security patch for Internet Explorer 8, the latest Windows XP version. I guess with folks changing their default browser, Microsoft was afraid of losing IE market share. Since we can't be sure this will continue, I still recommend that Windows XP users change their default browser! However, if you want to restore Internet Explorer 8 back to your default



### **Nuggets from Nuvo** by Joe Nuvolini, P\*PCompAS

browser, select Tools, Internet Option, then the Programs tab and click on Make default under Default web browser.

Jack Dunning reports in ComputerEdge magazine that we can expect Update 2 to Windows 8 this coming August or September. This update will mark the return of the Start Menu. However he goes on to say "The question is whether the Windows 8 brand has been irreparably damaged by all of Microsoft's missteps. Now when someone hears the name Windows 8, they think of a confusing, hard to learn version of Windows. Once a brand takes a negative position in the brain, it's almost impossible to dislodge it." I tend to agree. To get away from the name Windows 8, look for Windows 9 in the Spring of 2015! To see what the Update 2 Start Menu looks like, check out Jack's article in the archived May 9th issue of ComputerEdge Magazine ([webserver.computeredge.com/online.mvc](http://webserver.computeredge.com/online.mvc)).

I noticed while driving up Union Blvd recently that there is a sign in front of Alpine Computers indicating that they will recycle your old computer free of charge. They are located on the northeast corner of Union and Cache La Poudre, where Silicon Valley Computers was located many years ago. ☺



**The digerati met on Armed Forces Day (17 May) to discuss their plans for world domination through technology.**

**Below: Bob Blackledge hosted the May meeting in John Pearce's absence.**



**Online Guides to Fix Almost Anything Around the House, Car, Computer, or Bike**  
 Published with permission from Ira Wilsker, Golden Triangle PC Club, columnist for The Examiner, Beaumont, TX

WEBSITES:

- <http://www.makeuseof.com/tag/something-broken-learn-fix-anything-4-websites>
- <http://www.ifixit.com>
- <http://www.familyhandyman.com>
- <https://www.youtube.com/user/diyautoschool>
- <http://www.parktool.com/blog/repair-help>

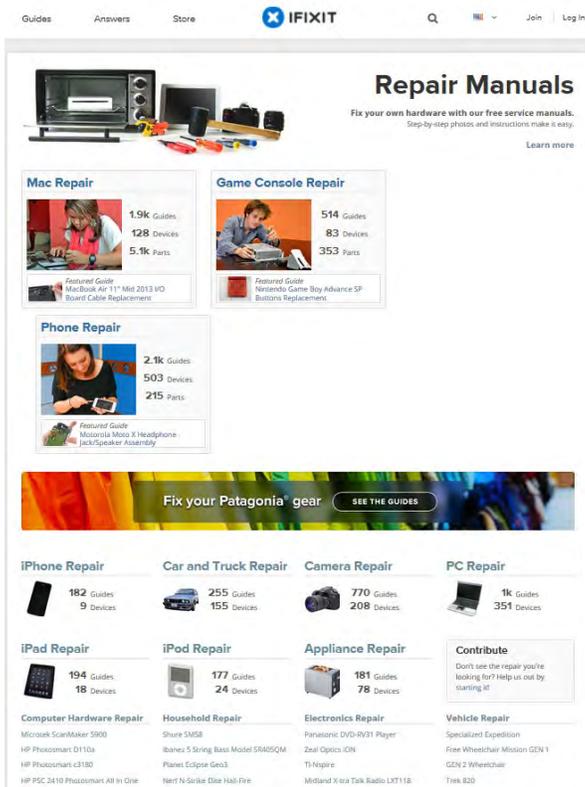
Readers of this column may be aware that there are several websites that I utilize as primary sources of information; one of those favorites is MakeUseOf.com. Recently, MakeUseOf.com published an article, "Something Broken? Learn To Fix Anything With These 4 Websites" (makeuseof.com/tag/something-broken-learn-fix-anything-4-websites), by Dann Albright. The preamble of the columns states, "No one likes it when their <sic> things break. It might be something big, like your TV or your car, or something smaller, like a leaky faucet or a cracked floor tile. You can spend hundreds of dollars to have a professional help you out, or you can learn how to fix it yourself for the cost of some tools and a couple hours of work. Which would you rather do?"

The first of the recommended websites is iFixit at ifixit.com. The website is self-described as "The free repair guide for everything, written by everyone." iFixit offers thousands of user written and illustrated repair guides for thousands of consumer products, all categorized into product types. Among the major categories listed are Mac Repair (1900 guides covering 128 devices and 5100 parts), Game Console Repair (514 guides, 83 devices, 353 parts), Phone Repair (2100 guides, 503 devices, 215 parts), iPhone repair (182 guides, 9 devices), Car and Truck Repair (255 guides, 155 devices), Camera Repair (770 guides, 208 devices), PC Repair (1000 guides, 351 devices), iPad Repair (194 guides, 18 devices), iPod repair (177 guides, 24 devices), Appliance Repair (181 guides, 78 devices), and direct links to a large selection of printers, scanners, musical devices, DVD recorders and players, flat screen TVs, classic (antique) computers, wheelchairs, skateboards, mopeds, and other items.

Since I, along with almost everyone else, have a phone of some type, I explored the iFixit phone guide; on the directory was every brand of home and cellular phone that I have ever heard of, and many that were unfamiliar to me. Since my wife and I both have Samsung smart phones, and Samsung is one of the largest manufacturers of smart phones, I selected Samsung under the Phone Repair directory, which then displayed 96 models of Samsung phones, both current and discontinued models. Somewhat randomly, I selected the Samsung Galaxy Note; iFixit displayed 14 replacement guides covering the battery, display, front and rear camera assembly, headphone and earpiece, memory card replacement, motherboard replacement, SIM card replacement, USB board replacement, antenna replacement, and other repairs, as well as links to sellers of replacement parts.

Since all of us routinely face automobile repair and maintenance issues, I selected the Auto Repair menu, and was presented with the logos for 41 brands and manufacturers, as well as special guides for auto accessories, car audio, and auto parts. There are two Hondas in my extended family so I clicked on the Honda icon; 12 specific Honda models were displayed, as well as two "Feature Guides" which provided

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## Clouded Judgment

by Greg Skalka, President, Under the Computer Hood UG, California, [www.uchug.org](http://www.uchug.org), president (at) uchug.org

The latest trend in computer operation and data storage is “in the cloud.” This refers to storage of files not on your local computer hardware, but on remote servers that are accessed through the Internet. The cloud can be used to store your files so they can be accessed from anywhere, not just from your own computer. Applications can be stored and run through the cloud, requiring less sophisticated local hardware.

Almost all computer users today presently use the cloud, and many probably don’t realize it. There are, of course, the online file storage sites which many use for storing and sharing photos. Any photos you view that are not in your computer, tablet, or smartphone’s local memory or hard drive are coming from the cloud. Videos you watch from YouTube, Netflix, or other websites originate

in the cloud. All the information you posted to Facebook about your personal activities now resides in the cloud. Anytime you play one of the games associated with the Google Doodles, those changes made to the Google home page logo to celebrate or commemorate something, you are playing a game in the cloud. In reality, the cloud is the Internet.

### Silver Linings

There are a lot of advantages to cloud storage and operation for the computer user. With your files stored on a hard drive in someone else’s server, you don’t need to have as much hard drive space of your own. Most online services, including Google, Yahoo, and Amazon, provide some free cloud storage to their account holders. Having your files in the online storage provided by these

companies allows access to your files from any computer connected to the Internet. If your computer is stolen or fails, your files are still safe in the cloud. This can be a great means of data backup, and most software backup programs now include a cloud option and online storage space for their customers.

Watching media content from the cloud has many advantages over local content. A vast array of movies and videos can be available to view over the Internet without the hassle of loading and storing them on your local hard drive.

Many programs that you might otherwise have had to install and run from local storage space on your computer can now be run over the Internet, often through a web browser. Web mail is one example of a cloud application.

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### Online Guides (Continued from page 4)

instructions on routine maintenance tasks.

While comprehensive, the iFixit guides do not cover all models and variations of products, but it does provide enough information on many of the most common consumer products that a moderately skilled individual can complete the listed repair and maintenance jobs.

The second of the websites recommended by MakeUseOf.com is the Family Handyman at [familyhandyman.com](http://familyhandyman.com). While this is the website of a commercial print magazine, the website contains thousands of guides on how to perform home repair and home improvement projects. The top of the website contains a menu bar, for which each item opens a selection of relevant topics. For those who prefer to go directly to a topic rather than navigating through a menu hierarchy, you can utilize the search box adjacent to the menu bar. The menu bar has links for rooms, skills, parts of the house, outdoors, and other areas of interest. Selecting “Rooms” from the menu bar displays a list of room types commonly in most homes,

with each room type opening an appropriate web page with details about projects for those rooms. As many of us have crowded and cluttered closets in our homes, that menu item seemed a logical first choice. The page that opened under the banner “Closet Organizers: Maximize storage space with these DIY closet organizers” displayed eight guides on organizing and improving closet space. Selecting another room, the kitchen, opened a page headed “Kitchen: Remodeling ideas for your kitchen with new cabinets, backsplashes, and lighting”, which included 50 guides covering such diverse kitchen related topics including installing backsplashes, sharpening knives, repairing or replacing kitchen appliances, repairing and replacing faucets, stove repairs, fixing broken ice makers, repairing kitchen cabinets and drawers, and other kitchen repairs and improvements.

Owning and maintaining a home requires an assortment of skills and knowledge; FamilyHandyman.com offers assistance with those skills and tasks under the appropriately

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*Online Guides (Continued from page 5)*

titled “Skills” heading on the menu bar. Sixteen skills are presented, with each linking to an appropriate compilation of tasks. Among the skills listed are Appliance Repair, Carpentry, Drywall, Electrical, Heating & Cooling, Painting, Pest Control, Plumbing, Tiling, and other household maintenance tasks and skills. Being in southeast Texas, with our heat, humidity, and endemic pest problems, I selected “Pest Control” from the Skills menu. The page is headed, “Pest Control: Keep pests out of your home with these do-it-yourself tips and advice from professional pest control specialists.” On this page are an even dozen illustrated guides covering relevant topics such as “Do Your Own Pest Control”, seasonal pest control guides, dealing with rodents and other small mammals, ridding your home of those pesky mosquitoes, keeping ants out of your home, and other interesting but necessary topics.

Other household components are listed under additional menu headings including “Parts of the House” (ceiling, doors, roof, floors, siding, walls, windows), and “Outdoors” (decks, garden, grills, patios, landscaping, and decking). As with the other categories, each of these links directly to a collection of appropriate guides dealing with common tasks encountered by homeowners.

MakeUseOf.com recommended the “DIY (Do It Yourself) Auto School YouTube Channel” ([youtube.com/user/diyautoschool](http://youtube.com/user/diyautoschool)) as its favorite source of auto repair information. As mentioned in the original article, and a characteristic that I agree with, this “DIY Auto School YouTube Channel” is a dedicated group of hundreds of videos on auto repair and maintenance topics that are easy to follow as well as entertaining, but not well organized. Among the YouTube videos in this channel are a series on getting rid of rust, replacing fuel lines, “Fueling Up For Gas-And Getting “RIPPED OFF” At The Pump!”, detailing your car yourself, removing dents using the “paintless” technique, using Bondo, carburetor repairs on older vehicles, restoring classic cars, how to change the pads on disc brakes, ‘Headlight Restoration Made Easy” (necessary to remove the light diffusing frosted finish becoming common on the lenses over the headlights on many cars), and many other auto repair topics. I played several of these videos and they are entertaining, “down-to-earth,” not overly technical, but clear enough for a novice to follow. For those who like to work on their own cars, this YouTube channel can be a gold mine of information.

The fourth and final website recommended

on the “Something Broken” MakeUseOf.com website is a guide on how to fix almost anything on a bicycle, provided by Park Tool Company, a 51 year old company manufacturing bicycle repair tools, located in St. Paul, Minnesota. Park Tool claims to be “... the world’s largest bicycle tool manufacturer.” This wide-ranging bicycle repair website is located at [parktool.com/blog/repair-help](http://parktool.com/blog/repair-help). Park Tool allows the user to locate detailed bicycle repair information using any one of the three listed tools; the first is an interactive image of a bicycle that displays repair topics as the user moves his cursor over the image of the bicycle; the second is a traditional menu on the right side of the window; and the third is a traditional search box. Personally, I found the interactive image method to be the most beneficial way to locate appropriate repair information as I did not know all of the bicycle nomenclature, and the interactive image displays part names as the user moves the cursor to that part of the bicycle image.

To get acquainted with the Park Tool maintenance and repair guide, I moved my cursor on the interactive image of a bicycle, and highlighted parts of interest. Being intrigued by the complex gearing on modern bicycles, a far cry from the old 3-speed bike that I grew up with, I selected the “Derailleur Systems,” which instantly displayed a dozen guides on adjusting, repairing, and maintaining the complex gearing on the modern bikes. Included in this selection were guides on properly sizing and tensioning the bicycle chain.

With about 150 bicycle repair and adjustment guides, all of which are clearly written, well illustrated, and included a complete listing of parts, tools, and supplies necessary for each repair, these Park Tool guides are a valuable adjunct for anyone who might want to work on his own bicycle. Using these guides, I hope to restore one of my old bicycles, doing all of the work myself.

These four very comprehensive repair guide websites recommended by MakeUseOf.com contain a wealth of information that may enable anyone with a modicum of skill and time to save money and have the satisfaction of doing their own repairs and upgrades. I know that I will “Make Use Of” these four resources in the near future, and that my readers may likely do the same. ☺

*Clouded Judgement (Cont. from page 5)*

With an e-mail client like Outlook or Thunderbird installed on your computer, you can download and read your Gmail e-mail and store it on your PC. Should something happen to your PC, however, your stored messages may be lost. By using the web mail online application for Gmail instead, you can always access your new and stored messages from any PC connected to the Internet.

More and more companies are providing cloud-based applications. Cloud software allows users to save local disk space, avoid installation issues, buy on a subscription basis, and always have the most current version. For software makers, cloud subscription software lowers distribution costs and provides continuous revenue streams. In addition to the traditional versions installed on your PC, Intuit now provides a web version for all of its TurboTax programs. Office 365 is Microsoft's cloud version of its Office software suite. It allows users to buy a subscription to their productivity software and run it from the Internet, with access for up to five PCs and five mobile devices. This allows users to have access to the most current Office software on a yearly or even monthly basis, with 20 GB of online storage for documents.

Another advantage of cloud computing is that the hardware requirements are lower, allowing computing devices that are less expensive and more mobile to be used. Tablet computers and smartphones don't have internal hard drives and their internal flash memory space is limited, so cloud file storage is almost a necessity. Google's low-cost Chromebook computers are specifically made for cloud computing. The latest version, built by HP, has 16 GB of flash memory, no hard drive, and is priced at \$279. It runs Google's Chrome OS and relies

on applications that run online like Gmail and Google Docs, with most data files stored in the cloud. With lower hardware requirements, cloud devices like this can be cheaper, lighter, and have greater battery life.

**Dark Clouds**

Unfortunately, there are a number of downsides to the cloud computing scenario. All those files you stored on someone else's server are now no longer fully under your control. Cloud services companies are occasionally acquired, sold, and shut down, so you may not be able to depend on your data being there when you need it. Cloud providers can also have access problems outside of your control, causing you to lose access to your data, perhaps at critical times. If your web e-mail provider is down, you lose all e-mail access. If you instead use an installed e-mail client, you at least have access to the e-mail archived on your PC.

With your data in the cloud, not only can there be problems for you to access your data, there can also be unintended access to your data by others. Since the terms of service are often unintelligible, you may not have full certainty that your data won't wind up in places you didn't intend it through intentional actions by the cloud companies. And you really don't know what might happen to your data if the company's servers are hacked. It is therefore risky to put sensitive personal information in the cloud, even if it is encrypted, as it could be compromised through no fault of your own.

Another problem with cloud computing is that it requires an Internet connection (often through Wi-Fi only) to do anything useful. If you can't get online, all those files and photos of yours in the cloud might as well be on the moon. That

Chromebook laptop may be small and light, but unless it can get a Wi-Fi signal (it has no wired Ethernet connector), it is pretty much useless dead weight, as most of its apps run over the Internet. Other Wi-Fi devices, like most tablet computers, have the same issue. Even with a cellular-connected tablet or smartphone, a good connection is never guaranteed. I recently found this to be the case in the lower decks of the U.S.S. Midway Aircraft Carrier Museum. If you want to be sure you can watch a movie on your tablet during your next plane flight, you'd better load it on the device.

The performance of web-based applications is often much worse than that of apps running on your local hardware. This is especially true if your Internet connection is poor. Even with good connections, some web sites always appear to be slow. I much prefer to use a local e-mail client for my e-mail as my e-mail provider's web mail site is so slow to respond.

**Clearing the Air for Personal Clouds**

In spite of the drawbacks, the trend towards computing devices that are more mobile yet storage-limited, like tablets and smartphones, is accelerating this push into the cloud. External USB hard drives and flash drives may be popular storage accessories for laptops, but few tablets have USB connections. A new class of external storage devices promises to expand the local storage for Wi-Fi devices like tablets, smartphones, Chromebooks, and even laptops. These devices combine the bulk storage of a hard drive or flash memory with a Wi-Fi hot spot to create your own personal cloud.

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## My Life with Devices

by Nancy DeMarte, 1st VP, Sarasota PCUG, Florida, [www.spcug.org](http://www.spcug.org), [ndemarte \(at\) Verizon.net](mailto:ndemarte@verizon.net)

It all started about six or seven years ago with my first device, an iPod Touch. This cell phone-sized device does not make phone calls, but does nearly everything else. It introduced me to the seemingly limitless i-Tunes store and helped me navigate through the maze of managing my music and "apps." This little device made me realize that I could carry hundreds of photos and songs in my purse, as well as get access to the Internet and my e-mail in any Wi-Fi hotspot. I walked the treadmill at the gym to the rhythm of my workout playlists and showed photos of my grandchildren to everyone who would look.



My second device was an original Kindle, an electronic book reader. As both a reader and a traveler, I was looking for a way of transporting the several books I'd need for one of our long cruises. Amazon's Kindle was nothing fancy, but was exactly what I wanted. It too was a Wi-Fi

only device, although the Internet was only needed for downloading books. Even now before a trip, I search for and download a number of books from the Kindle Store at Amazon, most free or very low cost. Then I turn off the Wi-Fi to save battery power and read away. When I fall asleep at night while reading in bed, Kindle also goes to sleep in a few minutes, saving my place in the book.



When the iPad first appeared on the market in 2010, I bragged to friends that I didn't need anything that big when I could do it all on my iPod Touch. But being the techno fan that I am, I couldn't resist jumping in when iPad 3 came out in 2012. It's amazing how much easier it is to read e-mail or play Words

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### Clouded Judgement (Cont. from page 7)



The Gigastone Smartbox (<http://www.gigastone.com/>; \$45)

combines an SD memory socket with an 802.11 b/g/n hot spot and a lithium ion battery. It allows up to six Wi-Fi devices to connect and share up to 32 GB of SDHC memory, providing handy file sharing and streaming. It can even provide a backup power source for USB-powered devices.

\$80) does all the Smartbox does for eight simultaneous users, and adds a port to share a USB Flash drive.



SanDisk's SDWS2 Connect Wireless Flash Drive ([www.sandisk.com/products/wireless/flash-drive](http://www.sandisk.com/products/wireless/flash-drive), \$60) does the same as Sony but can't charge other devices. The Kingston Digital MobileLite Wireless Flash Reader ([www.kingston.com/us/usb/wireless](http://www.kingston.com/us/usb/wireless); \$60) and Wi-Drive (\$60 for 32 GB) are similar products.

instead of flash memory, providing much more storage capacity. This includes the Patriot Aero Wireless Mobile Drive ([www.patriotmemory.com](http://www.patriotmemory.com); \$150 for 500GB), a 500 GB, or 1 TB USB3 external hard drive that serves to up to five wireless users. Other similar devices include the Corsair Voyager Air ([www.corsair.com/voyager-air](http://www.corsair.com/voyager-air)) and the Seagate Wireless Plus ([www.seagate.com](http://www.seagate.com)).

In spite of drawbacks, a greater use of portable devices means an increase in cloudiness in the computer world. To avoid operating in a dangerously obscuring fog, good judgment must be used in determining how and where to store there. Personal clouds like the wireless mobile storage devices now available can be a safe and convenient storage alternative for use with mobile devices. ☺



The Sony WG-C10 Portable Wireless Server ([http://www.sony.net/Products/ws/en\\_us/pwsintro](http://www.sony.net/Products/ws/en_us/pwsintro);

Another class of mobile storage devices uses a hard drive



*Devices (Cont. from page 8)*

with Friends on that larger screen. Over time I got smarter about apps: fewer games and more utilities. When the Florida thunderclouds appear overhead, I check the time lapse radar with my RadarCast app. I keep in touch with my son and daughter with FaceTime or Skype. Although I still use my Kindle for reading books, I enjoy magazines on the iPad because they're in color and never get recycled. Email is easier on the iPad, too, both reading and writing. When my husband and I do the morning NYT crosswords each day, the iPad is our quickest cheating option. I have a portable stock of favorite recipes in the Recipe Book app and regularly download new ones from many of the best-known websites.

I was a late adopter of cell phones, and even then I chose a cheap, basic phone. My mother was

in her 90's; I needed to be on call. About then, a friend gave me very good advice: "Have no more than one device that has a monthly fee." The cellphone became that device. It was only this year that I recycled the basic phone in favor of an iPhone 5. And it has turned out to be the right move. Last summer we rented a cottage on a lake where there was no Wi-Fi. I found that my iPad lost about 75% of its use to me because I had no Internet access. But my iPhone could do it all – read/send email, search the Net, play music, locate restaurants, talk to me, and take better pictures than my camera. You get the idea. A smartphone makes traveling a lot easier.

You may have noticed that I haven't mentioned computers among my devices. I have both a desktop and laptop and find them invaluable. When I need to write an article or set up a budget or make a greeting card or create a presentation -- in other words, when I need to produce something – nothing beats my computers. The



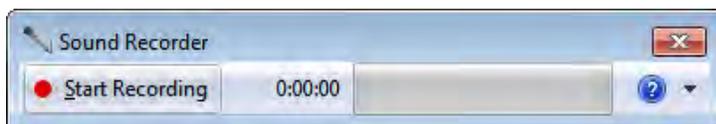
iPad offers several word-processing apps, even a small version of Word, but I like the full power of Microsoft Office, Photoshop Elements, and other full-featured productivity applications which work best on a PC, say nothing of the large monitor and classic keyboard. I use my "little" devices, as my husband calls them, for enjoying media and gathering information.

Besides the cost, there are challenges to owning all these devices: three cords for recharging, three cases, syncing, updating, and carrying them through security at airports. But I have a feeling that we are right now in a short transitional period. I have no doubt that within the next decade or two we will be able to do it all on a device that's no bigger than a ball point pen that can project a keyboard on the table and a monitor on the wall, all in response to our verbal commands. It will let us produce, entertain us, and keep us in touch with friends and family. All our personal devices will be packed into one. For now, though, like many other people, I'm dealing with a device management challenge that I really don't mind at all. ☺

## Windows 7 Tip: Using the Sound Recorder

Windows includes an accessory that you can use to record audio messages or other sounds. It is called (appropriately enough) Sound Recorder. It isn't as full-featured as some audio programs, but it is quick, easy and—best of all—free.

To start Sound Recorder, click the Start button and choose All Programs | Accessories | Sound Recorder. When the accessory starts, there really isn't much to it.



To check if Sound Recorder is working properly with your microphone, just start talking. You should

see a green indicator jumping about as the program detects your voice (and any other sounds in the room). When you are ready to start recording, click the Start Recording button and begin speaking into the microphone.

When you are done recording, click the Stop Recording button. Windows displays a Save As dialog box, which you can use to specify the location and name for the sound file just recorded. The size of the file depends on how long of an audio clip you recorded.

To later play the sound file, simply use Windows Explorer to locate the file and double-click on it. ☺

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**Coming Events:**

**Next Membership Meeting: 7 June, beginning at 9 am (see directions below)**

**Next Breakfast Meeting: 21 June @ 8 am, Country Buffet, 801 N. Academy Blvd.**

**Newsletter Deadline: 21 June.**

Check out our Web page at: <http://ppcompas.apcug.org>

