# Bits of Bytes

> ### Next P*PCompAS meeting: Saturday, 5 July 2014
> Member Cary Quinn will discuss "Topics on Cloud Computing."

## The Prez Sez
**by John Pearce,
President, P*PCompAS**

The July meeting will feature a presentation by member Cary Quinn titled "Topics on Cloud Computing."

See you at the meeting July 5th. ☺

## Meeting Minutes

**by Toni Logan,
Secretary,
P*PCompAS**

The 7 June 2014 meeting was called to order by President John Pearce. He reminded us that coffee and donuts are free for first-time visitors and a donation by all others. The coffee is provided by Laura at Starbucks at the Citadel Crossing.

The program today is an audio presentation on Security and SuperGenPass. The minutes of the last meeting were approved as printed in the newsletter.

OFFICER REPORTS

Vice-President Bob Blackledge reported that the program for August would be from the Pikes Peak Library District. There were suggestions that we have a program on the "cloud."

Treasurer Dennis Conroy reported that the total in the treasury was $6741.32. There were no expenditures this month.

Newsletter Editor Greg Lenihan reported that the next deadline was June 21.

Hospitality Chair Pat Krieger repeated her plea that we ask a friend to join the club.

APCUG Rep and Webmaster Joe Nuvolini reported that he had filed the 2013 tax return for our group.

Media Rep Ilene Steinkruger had two coupons from O'Reilly. She had forwarded e-mails from Focal Press and wondered if anyone had gotten any books? No one had. She also had a plea for anyone to review a book, so if you are interested, contact Ilene.

OLD BUSINESS: None

NEW BUSINESS

The next social breakfast is on June 21 and the next meeting is July 5. Please help put the tables and chairs away after the meeting.

AROUND THE ROOM

Many topics in "Around the Room" concerned whether video files worked on Photo Frames; DDay podcasts; the "Cloud"; another Acronis backup success story, and other problems solved. Hear the audio on our Website.

PROGRAM

The program was an audio presentation on Security, password design, and password haystacks on GRC. The second topic discussed was SuperGenPass.

DRAWING

Ebook Certificate – Chuck Kinsley ☺

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**\*\*NEWS FLASH\*\***
**Source: https://blog.onedrive.com/new-onedrive-storage-plans/**

To accompany our presentation in July on Cloud computing comes news that Microsoft has increased their free storage capacity on OneDrive to 15 GB for everyone (it was previously 7 GB), and will provide 1 TB for Office 365 subscribers (for a fee depending on your plan). This is where you can store your photos, video, docs, etc.

If you don't need Office 365, you can buy more storage on OneDrive. You can get 100 GB for $1.99/month and 200 GB for $3.99/month. That is more than the size of most of my hard drives. ☺

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## In This Issue

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

Our group had a really good discussion last month on security and SuperGenPass (SGP). I like the strong passwords that SuperGenPass creates and its ease of use. Based on the discussion, it seems maybe a few people are reluctant to adopt SuperGenPass.

For those people, I have two password resources for you. The first is Password Strength Checker at http://www.passwordmeter.com/. It uses a set of generally accepted rules to evaluate passwords and gives a strength score as a percentage value and a complexity rating. In addition to the ratings, there is a display of the "additions" and "deductions" used in arriving at its results.

The second is a tool Telepathwords developed by Microsoft and Carnegie Mellon University at https://telepathwords.research.microsoft.com/. The site predicts the next character you will enter in the password. If it guesses correctly, an X is displayed above that letter; otherwise a checkmark shows an incorrect guess. A good password needs five checkmarks. Be sure to read How Does Telepathwords Work at the bottom of the page. It is possible to have five checkmarks, yet the password could be easily guessed.



Strong passwords do not have to be as complicated or hard to



remember as those generated by SGP. For example, "Coloradorain1!" receives a score of 89% and a complexity rating of Very Strong, plus it gets seven checkmarks from Telepathwords. Much of the strength is from the "1!" at the end. Without these two characters, the rating is Weak. Moving the characters "1!" to the middle of the password improves the score to 93%.

A few months ago, I read about a method of creating passwords by using a base password that never changes then making it unique by putting the site name or abbreviation inside the base. Unfortunately, I am unable to find the original article and unable to provide a link to it.

The base password "Pass1!Phrase" by itself has a pretty good rating. Since you should never reuse a password, it needs to be made unique and easy to remember. If you put something that is unique to each website between the "!P" characters, the rating improves substantially. For Yahoo Finance (finance.yahoo.com), you might use "Pass1!YahooPhrase" or "Pass1!FinancePhrase" or "Pass1!StocksPhrase." These examples produce excellent ratings from both password tools. ☺

## From Ground to Cloud Computing
### *A simple and hopefully easy primer to get you off the ground and into the Cloud*
### by Cary Quinn, P*PCompAS

What is the CLOUD? It's the latest industry buzzword for a great shift in the changing way we use technology to accomplish the same things we were doing before, but hopefully better, faster and more efficiently. (Once we understand how it works).

The simplest explanation for the Cloud is that it represents everything that you can connect to online when you don't know exactly what you are connecting to.

But that is so simple an explanation that it can be confusing in itself for all the information that it leaves out. If you are working with information (and everything* you do on an electronic device is working with some type of information), and that information is created, loaded, or saved directly on that device; that is a personal connection. The data is right there on your person or where you can reach it easily. Let's call that the home or ground space for your data. (*even when you don't recognize what is there as information you can use.)

Sometimes you have that information stored on another device on a network. You can still access it fairly easy, but you have to be on that network to take the extra step to get to it. Like walking into another room to pick up a book. Let's call that a local connection.

What if the information in that book is somewhere outside of your personal space? What if you have to travel to the local library to pick up that book, or call a friend so they can bring it over from another room? That is a form of networking. You are using a connection to something outside of your home space to get to information that you need.

What if you don't know where the library is, and you have to call your friend to pick the book up for you? That, in a way, is the essence of Cloud Computing—you don't have to know exactly where the information is, as long as you have an easy way to request and use it.

So how is that supposed to work? Well, some of you may remember an impromptu talk I gave on virtual computing a few months ago where I explained how a virtual machine is a program that pretends to be another computer of its own and where you can run software. The Cloud is an online version of that same idea on a massive scale. You connect to an online resource that is dedicated to handle information in a certain way for you, even if you don't know exactly where that resource is, or even if it is one resource or many combined.

So is it client-server or the old BBS systems and services like AOL and Compuserve? Not quite. Here we get into virtual server farms and how some of those services have moved from a direct-server model to a cloud-like platform.

Previously, if you connected to AOL for instance, all the connections and all the users

**While crowds were hanging out at Stonehendge for the 2014 summer solstice, the club digerati hung out where there was bountiful food and good vibes. The Country Buffet provided both.**

I recently had another Acronis True Image save but there is a lesson to be learned from this one. I got a call from John at the office that his Windows XP computer would no longer boot. Troubleshooting revealed that the C partition had been trashed. John uses both Acronis True Image and Carbonite on this system for backup. We booted from his True Image 9 Recovery CD and found that his last Acronis backups were made last October. When we tried to restore the C drive, we got a message stating that the archive was not a True Image file or it was corrupted. We got the same results on the D and E partition archives. Fearing the worst, we re-partitioned the drive and reinstalled Windows XP. Unfortunately we could not find the motherboard drivers CD. About that time, John remembered that he had purchased True Image 12 some time ago. Luckily he was able to find the installation and recovery CDs for version 12. Once we booted from the proper recovery CD, we were able to restore all three partitions. He then restored his data files from Carbonite and he was back in business. The moral of this story is twofold. First, to back up more frequently, and second, to make sure you are using the correct recovery CD when restoring a True Image archive. Interestingly, after his Acronis recovery, he had some 50+ Windows XP updates from Microsoft. Even though this was over a month after Microsoft

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

ceased support for Windows XP, it appears that the updates prior to April 8th are still out there at the Windows Website. Live and learn!

For those who don't know, Smart Computing Magazine is history. The monthly computing and technology magazine was published by Sandhills Publishing Company in Lincoln, Nebraska. Formally known as PC Novice, it was first published in 1990, and the last issue was published in October 2013 (**https://archive. org/details/smartcomputing- magazine-v2410**).

Geoffrey Fowler had a lengthy article in the June 18th Wall Street Journal on 3-D printing. He says that for industry, the use is well known. It can be used for making custom heart valves and jet engine parts. However the use for a home user is not so clear. While he has used them, he has not yet found a killer practical application that makes a it a necessary home appliance. To make two pocket combs costs $1.65 and takes about two hours. While you can buy patterns online to make various items, you have to find one that suits your needs. Goeffrey say you'll have to make close to 3000 combs to recoup the $1,375 price tag of the MakerBot printer. Hopefully as prices come down, they will be more cost effective for the home user. ☺

**Ground to Cloud (Cont.from page 3)**

were going through a central access point where all the storage, e-mails, and user ids were kept. Usually that was in the form of a "Server Farm" or a location where many computers were brought together as a local connection to a larger network. Now it is just as likely that the servers that manage that information are spread out in many different locations (like the branches of a library), but like your local library district, all the branches communicate with each other to make sure you get the information that you are looking for. The branch itself is just a temporary setup made to look familiar enough that it is still

easy for you to request or look up the book that you are interested in.

So if I don't know where it is, what hardware it is running on, and what it's actually doing with my data, why should I trust it?

This may sound like mild paranoia on my part but basically you shouldn't worry. Rather, you should not trust it any more than you trust any friend, neighbor, or business that you trade or give valuable information to. Do I trust Google's e-mail service to help filter spam away from my inbox? Sure, since it is in that company's interest to provide spam protection to all the users of its email service, and the more people that use it,

the better they are able to filter messages overall. Do I trust Google with my banking information? No, Google is not a bank. They don't have to follow all the same rules for protecting my money, health records, or the product keys I have for my Microsoft software. But I can go to my credit union and get a safety deposit box to store copies of my records, and let them follow well established rules and methods to protect my money. So a good rule for you is to trust within reason. Trust that Google is interested in keeping your e-mail safe for the same reasons that they are interested in keeping their own e-mail safe. Trust yourself to

## New Trends in Laptop Computing
*Published with permission from Ira Wilsker, Golden Triangle PC Club, columnist for The Examiner, Beaumont, TX*

WEBSITES:
http://shop.lenovo.com/us/en/landingpage/convertibles-splitter/
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Moore%27s_law
http://www.microsoft.com/surface/en-us
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Microsoft_surface

One of the primary factors that makes technology so intriguing to me is the rapidity to which it changes. My major name brand, "formerly" top-of-the-line, desktop PC is three years old, and still working perfectly, but has gone from a "gee whiz" technological level when it was new, to a "ho hum" level today. What was the fastest multi-core processor (CPU) available in consumer computers when I purchased mine, is no longer even listed by its manufacturer, and can only now be found deeply discounted on eBay, and sometimes in the "clearance" bargain bins of the online and big box technology sellers. In computing parlance, three years of calendar time is two or three generations in computer time.

I recently had the opportunity to visit one of our local big box office supply stores to look at some of the laptop computers that were advertised on sale. While I am definitely not oblivious to the degree of change taking place in the computing sphere, it was amazing how much hardware technology has changed, and how Moore's Law, originally prophesized in 1965,

still continues today somewhat unabated. In a paper presented in 1965, Gordon E. Moore, co-founder of Intel Corporation, predicted that the number of transistors in a dense integrated circuit doubles approximately every two years. Another Intel executive David House, predicted that chip performance would double every 18 months considering the increase in the number of transistors in a circuit along with their increase in speed. In 2010, the International Technology Roadmap for Semiconductors predicted that this rate of growth will slow by the end of 2013 when transistor counts and densities on microprocessors will double every three years.

This logarithmic increase in processing power has also been coupled with a dramatic decrease in costs, which has universally made available our "smart" technologies, with one of the latest iterations being termed "The Internet of Things," where more devices will be "smart" and interconnected, and powered by microprocessors. It is this dramatically increased level technology coupled with a dynamic decline in the cost of technology

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not put things in e-mail that you don't want Google (or anybody else) to be able to manipulate. Having said that, there are ways to place information into a lock box itself and then store the box in the cloud, but that is a topic for another article.

So, since we are going to do it anyway, and as we are here to talk about the usefulness of Cloud computing, let's look at some of the ways that the Cloud is already all around us.

To give a better end-user example of what the Cloud is, I will use three popular examples of cloud services:

- Cloud storage (Dropbox)
- Cloud processing (Google Services)
- Cloud collaboration and socializing (Facebook).

There are too many other examples I can give for these functions that I would like to show, so please don't take this as an overwhelming endorsement of these services, but more of a starting point for your own exploration of what the Cloud can do for you.

Let me give you a couple of quick basic examples and a scenario that brings them all together. As I am creating this article, I am saving the original of it on a USB flash drive. I am

periodically copying that document from the flash drive to my hard drive, if I had time to set it up correctly, the computer would automatically be syncing a copy to the hard drive for me.

The folder I am saving the file to is also the folder managed by the Dropbox application on my computer, so every time a file gets updated or copied into that folder, it is also automatically backed up to the Cloud. If I forget or lose the flash drive, I can still access and edit the document from another computer or device connected to my Dropbox account. If I don't have the right program to edit it from another computer, I can share it from Google Apps and also save

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*Laptop Computing (Continued from page 5)*

that has made these new devices so common, as was clearly displayed by the new laptops at the big box store.

There is not much need here to explain the history of laptops ranging from the big and heavy "lunch box" computers with their small monochrome screens, to the sleek and lightweight models of today. There has also been a lot of talk in the media recently about the concept of "convergence," where the concept of a full powered computer, a tablet, and a phone would be merged into a single device. While there will inevitably be revolutionary technological improvements in the near future, there is already significant evidence that much of that "convergence" is already here.

I was amazed that the large selection of laptop computers displayed in this major big box office supply store, with its reputation for selection and price, contained only a relative handful of what I would consider the traditional laptop computers that we are all so familiar with. Most of the laptops on display incorporated the popular touch screen display technology of tablets and smart phones along with the computing power, keyboard, and storage capacity of a more traditional laptop. These new touch screen laptops were surprisingly reasonably priced, often price competitive with the better tablets, thin, and lightweight. All of these newer devices had sharp and colorful touch screens, large internal storage, reasonable memory and video capabilities, WiFi-n capability, adequate keyboards, and other features that most of us are familiar with. Many utilized the newer SSD (Solid

State Drives) that offer much of the extensive storage capacity of a traditional hard drive, without the power consumption or vulnerability to physical damage, such as if dropped. Almost all can be used as a touch screen or with an integral touchpad, as well as with a USB connected or wireless mouse. All had a longer advertised battery life than comparable traditional laptops, and many also included the capability of utilizing the wireless broadband connectivity offered (for a fee) by the major cellular phone companies. Almost all of the models that I looked at also had a common Ethernet port for wired connectivity, several USB ports (many of which are the newer and faster USB 3.0 standard), an HDMI port for connecting to a TV or other video device, a DVI connector for connecting to a modern digital monitor, and a VGA port for connecting to other older video devices. Almost all of these new style laptops incorporate a build of Windows 8 explicitly designed for maximum functionality and ease of use on these devices.

Many of these new technology laptops offer a "twist," "flex," or "yoga" type of top or cover containing the touch screen that can be folded or closed inward like a traditional laptop, or turned or twisted outward, resembling a traditional tablet. Several of the models had a detachable screen which could be used independently as a tablet, but still running Windows 8.1.

*Ground to Cloud (Cont.from page 5)*

a copy there, where I can also format, spell check, and proofread the article. I could invite other people to preview, comment on, and even add input to the article as I am completing it.

As well as e-mailing the finished document from my Google Mail account, I can also post the article as an item to Facebook or another social media site as a link, or mention to the PPCompAS Website a reminder (in the calendar app of either site) that the article relates to an upcoming meeting. I could add pictures, music, or video

to the message, or link to this extra content to add on to my initial message. I could do this all from a laptop or smartphone while



sitting in a doctors waiting room or standing in line at the store checkout without ever having to touch my home computer or even have it turned on once the original information has been uploaded.

This is just a hint of what can be done with Cloud computing. You could say we have barely left the ground in our understanding of what is possible with this technology. In future articles, I will try to expand on where we are now and where the idea of a virtual cloud of storage, computing, and collaboration power can take us. ☺

You're at home ready to stream the latest episode of your favorite show. The popcorn is popped, you're in your favorite spot and everything is perfect.

When you fire up Netflix, though, the video is fuzzy and keeps stopping. Is your Internet provider slowing things down? Maybe. (http://www.komando.com/happening-now/251763/net-neutrality-5-isps-are-already-holding-web-speed-hostage).

However, in the days that follow you start noticing that the Internet itself randomly slows down on any gadget, whether it's streaming video or you're surfing like regular on your tablet or computer.

It could just be your Internet connection acting up ... or someone could be stealing your Internet. How do you know which it is? If someone *is* stealing your Internet, what can you do about it?

Start by taking stock of your network. Log in to your router and check the section that shows what gadgets are connected to your router.

**Hint:** Check your router's manual for instructions on logging in. If you can't find your manual, download a digital copy here: http://www.komando.com/cool-sites/6037/thousands-of-free-online-user-manuals.

If you want an easier solution, you can grab the aptly named Wireless Network Watcher (http://www.nirsoft.net/utils/wireless_network_watcher.html) This free program gives you a list of gadgets connected to your Wi-Fi network. You can quickly fire it up whenever you want to check or just leave it open.

Once you have the list of connected gadgets, identify the ones that belong to you. Your computer should show up in the list using its name, for example. Your tablet or smartphone should have the manufacturer name in there somewhere.

If you can't make heads or

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**Laptop Computing (Continued from page 6)**

While not as heavily loaded or as powerful as some of its big brothers, I was favorably impressed by one of the smaller Lenovo Flex touch screen laptops, with its 10.1" screen. I compared it to the generic 10.1" Android tablet that I purchased about six months ago, and the Lenovo Flex model had twice the available memory, 40 times more internal storage, higher resolution screen, twice the battery life, integral keyboard, Windows 8.1, superior connectivity, and other capabilities lacking in my Android tablet. The Lenovo Flex was a little thicker than my tablet (about 3/4"), but still only about half the thickness of my older traditional laptop. The Lenovo Flex was a little heavier than my tablet, but seemed far more rugged. With a touch screen that could be folded outward resembling a tablet, this Lenovo Flex computer was priced under $300.

Models of touch screen laptops manufactured by Acer, Dell, HP, Lenovo, and Samsung were also abundant, with screen sizes ranging from 10.1" to 15.6" available. The different computers had an assortment of processors, memory up to 8 GB, and SSD or hard drives with storage capacities up to 1 TB. Utilizing the latest in technology, the ease of use of an interactive touch screen, and priced competitively with comparable traditional laptops, if I had to purchase a new laptop today, it would be a touch screen and not a similar more traditional laptop.

While not carried by this particular big box store, another touch screen maker of note would have to be Microsoft, which is selling a series of its own touch screen devices under the moniker "Microsoft Surface." Often priced a little higher, but still competitive with the other makers, Microsoft calls its Surface computers "The tablet that can replace your laptop." The latest models being promoted by Microsoft as "Surface Pro 3" include a very high resolution 12" screen, up to 9 hours of battery life, and latest Intel fourth generation multi-core processors up to the i7. Most of the Surface computers from Microsoft basically are advanced tablets running Windows 8, but offer a removable cover (optional at extra cost on some models) that includes a keyboard, and options such as a kickstand that allows the tablet to be supported in a comfortable upright position like a common monitor, USB and external video connectivity,

### Neighbors Stealing Internet (Cont. from page 7)

tails of the list, simply turn off each gadget one by one - or just disable the gadget's Wi-Fi - to figure out what is what. I'd write it down for future reference.

When you find a gadget connected to the network that doesn't belong to you, you know you have a culprit.

You might need to check back a few times if the Internet slowdown is random. The culprit might only be using your Internet infrequently.

Even if you spot a rogue connection, however, you won't be able to tell who is connected. Well, not unless you want to barge into your neighbors' houses to check their gadgets' names and MAC addresses. For the record, I don't recommend doing that.

Fortunately, it doesn't matter. Encrypting your Wi-Fi network will usually be enough to keep intruders out. In fact, you should secure your Wi-Fi network no matter what. There are too many horror stories of criminals or perverts using someone else's Wi-Fi in hacking attacks or trading illegal images. As the owner of the Wi-Fi, you're going to have to straighten things out with the police, and it won't be fun.

If your network is already encrypted, and someone still snuck on, you should change your password immediately. Then keep an eye on things to see if they manage to get on again.

If they do, it's possible they got into your router and set up a backdoor. Reset your router to factory settings - check your manual for instructions - then set it up again from scratch. That means changing the default password, enabling encryption, picking a new SSID, and turning off any remote management features.

**Note:** If you change your encryption password, you will need to update the password on all your gadgets.

If you go through these steps and don't see an unauthorized connection on your Wi-Fi and your Internet is still slow, then you'll need to do more troubleshooting.

Test your Internet speed to see if it matches what you're paying for. Try running it a few times both plugged directly into the router and over Wi-Fi.

If your Wi-Fi speed is way slower than your Internet speed, you might need to upgrade

your router. It could just be bogging down with all your gadgets.

Otherwise, call your Internet provider and see what the story is. You might be due for a modem upgrade or there could be another problem on the line. ☺

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### Tip: Hoaxes and Rumors

You can't believe everything you read on the Internet, but how do you find out if something is true or not? Here are some places to go.

**Urban Legends** (Snopes)—One of the best known of its type. All sorts of subjects, not just Internet material, can be found here.

**Hoax Busters**—A very large collection of Internet hoaxes can be found here. This is another site that has been around for quite a while.

**Hoax Slayer**—Site for checking out e-mail hoaxes and scams.

**Federal Trade**) **Commission scam alerts**—US government list of scams of all sorts. Not limited to the Internet.

**OnGuardOnline**—A US government site with a list of online scams. ☺

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### Laptop Computing (Continued from page 7)

cellular carrier connectivity, and other optional enhancements. While in a form factor closer to a tablet than a laptop, these Microsoft Surface tablets offer the power and functionality of more traditional laptops. Introduced in 2012, with screens from 10.6" to 12" the Surface family has gone from the original Surface tablet, to later generations of Surface RT, Surface 2, Surface Pro 2, and the latest Surface Pro 3. Each subsequent generation offers more power, speed, and functionality than the previous models; with Microsoft's name and marketing clout, it is likely that we will be seeing more Surface tablets replacing traditional laptops.

With all of these newer types of computers becoming more available and affordable, my next major PC purchase may very well be a touch screen laptop. Just to add another



variable to the mix, most of the monitor makers are also producing touch screen monitors that can be used with modern desktop computers or as an adjunct to a touch screen laptop. If I do not purchase a new touch screen laptop right away, and wait for a few months, newer technologies may become available, and prices may drop.

Decisions ... decisions.  ☺

## Computer Problems Plague Everyone, Even Me
### by Sandy Berger, CompuKISS, Sandy (at) compukiss.com, www.compukiss.com

Why do things change on your computer? One day everything comes up just as it normally does. The next day, you can't get on the Internet, the icons are in a different place, and/or your program is working differently. Well I am here to tell you that everyone has problems like this -- even me! Here's the whole story!

When weird things happen on the computer, most people immediately blame themselves saying, "I must have done something to make this happen." The truth, however, is that in the computer world, changes can happen without your having done a thing to cause them. This was really brought home to me this week when I had several "problems" with my own computer.

When I sat down to work on the computer last Monday, the icons for my password manager and several other shortcuts that I use regularly were no longer on my browser toolbar at the top of the screen. On Tuesday, when I opened my Quicken program, the numbers and text was twice as large as normal. On Thursday I tried to play some music and found that iTunes was no longer working. On Friday I found that my CD drive, which I hadn't used for months, was no longer working.

Now, it is unusual for all of these things to happen in one week, but it is not unusual for them to happen. I did not do anything to cause any of these changes. So what happened? Well the simple explanation is that the computer is run by millions of lines of code. As you work on the computer, add files, and download programs, things change. Even installing updates from the manufacturer causes changes. Sometimes these changes, even if they are aimed at making a certain part of the computer better or more secure, can adversely affect other programs and other computer operations.

Although these types of changes can produce huge frustrations for the end user, the first thing to learn is that you probably didn't cause the different behavior and that, if you remain cool and calm, you can often correct the changes. Here's how I got through my aggravating week.

To find the missing icons, I had to look carefully at the screen where they normally appear. I found two arrows next to where the icons normally appeared. Low and behold, when I pressed the arrows, the missing icons cascaded down. To actually solve the problem, I simply put my cursor on the area next to the arrows until it turned into a double-ended arrow. Then I dragged that to the left and my icons appeared and remained on the screen.

Quicken was another disconcerting item. For several days, the text and numbers appeared larger one time and smaller the next. To be honest, I never found the cause, but luckily it all went back to normal and has stayed that way.

Why in the world would iTunes stop working? I had no explanation, but I did have an easy solution. I simply reinstalled the iTunes program. It was aggravating and a bit time-consuming to have to do so, but after I did, everything went back to normal.

The most vexing problem was my CD drive. Last time I used it, it worked fine. Now it wasn't working. It did not appear in My Computer at all. A trip over to the Device Manager showed the CD drive with a yellow exclamation meaning that it was not working properly, which I already knew. I tried a few things like uninstalling the CD driver and rebooting, but had no success. I knew that this could be a hardware problem. Perhaps the drive itself had stopped working. I also knew, that it could be a software problem. Since the driver and filters from the operating system are used to run the CD drive and other peripherals, I decided to check that out first. I headed over to the Microsoft website where I found a Microsoft tool called "Fix It." I used it to troubleshoot and correct the problem. There are multiple Fix It tools, and the proper one can be a bit hard to find, but Fix It checked out the software, found the problem, and helped me quickly solve the problem at no cost. That sure beat having to purchase and install a new CD drive.

Well, now everything on my computer is back to normal. At least for the moment. The moral of the story is that, unfortunately, we have to expect glitches when working with computers. The best thing that you can do is to keep your eyes open for possible solutions, learn as much as you can about how your computer works and be bold enough to troubleshoot small problems. I keep my Sherlock Holmes hat ready for use at any time. You may want to do the same. ☺

**P*PCompAS Newsletter**
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**Coming Events:**
**Next Membership Meeting:** 5 July, beginning at 9 am (see directions below)
**Next Breakfast Meeting:** 19 July @ 8 am, Country Buffet, 801 N. Academy Blvd.
**Newsletter Deadline:** 19 July.

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