

Bits of Bytes

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

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February 2016

Issue 2



The Prez Sez

by Cary Quinn,
President,
P*PCompAS

CES is a celebration of consumer electronics and technology that we remark on every year. PPCOMPAS is a celebration of technology users that will be remarkable yet again on February 2nd. See you there. ☺



Meeting Minutes

by Toni Logan,
Secretary,
P*PCompAS

President Cary Quinn greeted all with a "Happy New Year" and opened the 2 January 2016 meeting at 9 am. He reminded us that coffee is free to 1st time guests and a donation for all others. The coffee is donated by the Starbucks store at Citadel Crossing.

The President asked us to help clean up after the meeting by putting away tables and chairs. The minutes of the last meeting were approved.

OFFICER REPORTS

The President reported that the next meeting will be about CES.

The Treasurer's records are in the process of being turned over to the new Treasurer, Bill Gardner.

Membership Chair Ann Titus said that dues were due this month.

Editor Greg Lenihan had extra copies of the newsletter to hand

Next P*PCompAS meeting: Saturday, 6 February 2016

The topic is what went on at CES.

out. He said that the deadline for the next newsletter is Saturday, January 23, 2016.

OLD BUSINESS

The President said that we need a volunteer to do the newsletter as Greg would like to retire.

NEW BUSINESS

The speakers for the club's computer are not working. Joe Nuvolini tried to fix them, but with no luck. He is looking for some replacements. If you have any to donate, let him know. Joe has a new HDMI cable to connect to the projector.

Greg Lenihan turned over the coffee records to David George, who will take care of making the coffee in the future.

Since we are in a new year, we are looking for presentations. If you have any interest in doing a presentation or know someone who is, let the President know.

Unfortunately, we have to report that a former president of the club, Toni Hupp, has passed away in Arizona.

The Volunteers Lunch will be held at Old Chicago at Austin Bluffs & Academy on Saturday, January 30 at noon.

We have a new member, Bill Abell.

AROUND THE ROOM

Comments from the Around the Room session can be found on audio at the club's website.

PROGRAM

The program was a Skype presentation by Abby Stokes on "Is This Thing On?" which is about good computer habits.

DRAWING

CD's won by John Linder and Bob Blackledge
Publisher Pro won by Ray Weikart
Smart Security won by Cary Quinn
Caspers Anti Virus won by Harvey McMinn
Keyboard won by Warren Hilll ☺



Abby Stokes was our presenter in January with Cary Quinn running the webinar via Skype.

In This Issue

Articles

5 Windows 10 Tips.....	6
Cutting the Cable	3
Interesting Internet Finds	2
Nuggets from Nuvo.....	3
In Memory of Toni Hupp	4

P*PCompAS

Meeting Minutes	1
The Prez Sez	1



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Nuggets from Nuvo

by Joe Nuvolini, P*PCompAS

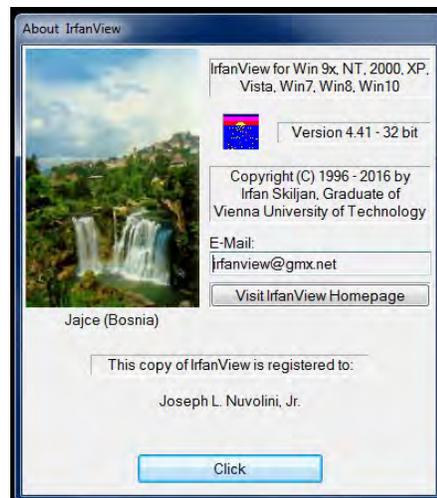
One of my favorite programs, IrfanView, is twenty years old this year. I can't remember when I discovered this exceptional program but it couldn't have been too long after its release. I use it for all my imaging needs. I have used it to manage all the photos on my Web page and have so for years. I have found the batch resize/rename feature extremely useful in this area. I registered it early on when the fee was \$10. Now that is up to \$12, which is about an increase of one euro.

I have always urged those who use it to register, as at that price it is an exceptional value. When you register it you get your name and a code you can paste into the registration area and your name will be displayed as the owner (see image). Payment options can be found on Irfan's Web site under Support IrfanView (www.irfanview.com). Both versions can also be downloaded at this site. The latest 4.41 version comes in both a 32-bit



and 64-bit version. The program has some 58 plug-ins that are contained in a separate download. Information on what these do can also be found at his Web page under Plugins. There is a wealth of other information on the program there including an FAQ and forum section.

Irfan has received over 65,000 messages of congratulations and well wishes on the program. I have e-mailed him on several occasions when I have run into an issue. He has almost always responded within 24 hours. I'm not sure whether support is available to non-registered users, but if not, all the more reason to register your copy. If this sounds like a commercial for the program, perhaps it is. When I find a program which has served me so well all these many years, I like to promote it. I have written about the features in the past but the best way to check them out is to download the product and try it. You will find it can do many of the things that more expensive imaging programs can do and I'm pretty sure it will do some things they can't. Give it a try, and if you like it, cough up the registration fee. It is one of the best bargains on the market! ☺



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Cutting the Cable? Alternatives to Cable and Satellite TV

Published with permission from Ira Wilsker, Golden Triangle PC Club, columnist for The Examiner, Beaumont, TX

WEBSITES:

<http://www.tomsguide.com/us/cord-cutting-guide,news-17928.html>
<http://www.amazon.com/Amazon-W87CUN-Fire-TV-Stick/dp/B00GDQ0RMG>
<http://www.wired.com/2014/10/amazon-fire-tv-stick-comparison-chart/>
<http://www.pcmag.com/article2/0,2817,2456300,00.asp>
<https://www.google.com/chromecast/tv/>
<http://lifehacker.com/chrome-unveils-the-chromecast-an-hdmi-stick-for-stream-897062318>
<https://www.roku.com>
<https://www.roku.com/products/compare>
<http://www.apple.com/tv/>
<http://www.rokuguide.com/articles/the-best-roku-channels-most-watched-channels-in-all-categories>
<http://www.rokuguide.com/articles/the-best-news-channels-on-roku>
<https://www.netflix.com>
<http://www.hulu.com/welcome>
<https://channelstore.roku.com/browse/new/by-popular>
<http://www.tomsguide.com/us/best-tv-antennas,review-2354.html>
https://store.google.com/product/_chromecast_2015_coral

Based on my own recent experiences, it is becoming more apparent that many people are choosing to do what is generically referred to as “cutting the cable” by intentionally dropping their cable or satellite TV subscriptions. With the ready availability of fast broadband internet service, and a variety of devices that can be used to effectively and economically replace the cable or satellite feeds along with their corresponding monthly bills, one or more internet

connected devices can provide the entertainment.

Over the recent holidays, I spent some time with one of my daughters who is a Dallas area resident; early in 2015 she intentionally “cut the cable” service that she had subscribed to for several years, replacing the cable feed with an internet feed and an inexpensive digital TV antenna. By her own accounting, she is saving over \$100 a month in cable fees, but believes that she is not missing much on cable, but instead has a much larger selection of channels to choose from. Last week, while at a professional meeting, one of my compatriots was talking about the “smart TV” which his family bought itself as a Christmas present, but has no idea about how to use it, other than connect it to his existing satellite box. Last year, I purchased an inexpensive Google Chromecast and a similarly priced Amazon Fire TV Stick, which were each very easy to plug into my flat screen TVs. To join the 21st century, I also now have a large screen smart TV internally running the Roku smart TV system.

At the already mentioned professional meeting last week, we tangentially spent about 20 minutes

Continued on page 4



Where better to go in the middle of January than to hang out with fellow digerati. It was the type of warm, cozy atmosphere that aids the digestion and improves the spirit.



Curtting the Cable (Cont. from page 3)

talking about smart TVs and cable cutting, and apparently there is potentially a great deal of interest in the subject. The decision to cut the cable or satellite service is a strictly personal decision which should incorporate cost considerations as well as channel availability.

As you have likely seen advertised on several of the local TV channels, there is an abundance of relatively low cost digital so-called HD TV antennas which have a common coax connection which connects directly to a modern TV. Locally, using a \$10 indoor digital antenna, with no monthly fees (free), I get a good quality signal from all of the mainstream local TV stations and networks, as well as several other less known, but still entertaining TV stations; people living farther from the TV transmitters may need a better, more powerful or amplified antenna (around \$40) to get good signal. While helping my Dallas area daughter replace the cable feed on her guest bedroom flat screen TV with another \$10 digital antenna, I was amazed to see how many Dallas area stations that were available. In addition to the major networks of CBS, NBC, ABC, FOX, and others, there were also about 50 other lesser known stations that had a decent digital signal which we picked up from her house,

all without a monthly fee. The process was simple; simply set up the antenna as instructed (near a window is often a good choice), and connect its attached cable to the coax connector on the back of the TV. Using the TV's remote control, go to the menu, select "Antenna," and then allow the TV to scan for channels; within a few minutes, her guest bedroom TV had about 50 free TV channels with all of the major network shows and news being freely available.

If going to the "Free TV" option of using an antenna, we could obviously not access the popular cable and satellite exclusive channels such as CNN, FOX News, AMC, History Channel, HBO, and others, but technology has provided us with some reasonably priced alternatives to the cable and satellite provided stations, many of which are now becoming available on these alternative devices. The basic versions of these alternative devices typically sell in the \$25 to \$50 range with more sophisticated units available at higher prices. These devices plug directly into an available HDMI port on the back of the TV, and require a good broadband internet connection which can be Wi-Fi or in some cases wired Ethernet. Newer TVs immediately recognize these devices as input

much the same way that they would have recognized a cable or satellite connection. If the internet connection of the device is via Wi-Fi (the most commonly used method of connection), all the user has to do is enter his Wi-Fi password, and instantly countless new channels appear. Using either the included remote control, or a smart phone or tablet app as a remote control, exploring what may potentially be over a thousand new TV channels may be a daunting, but pleasing task.

I have experimented with three of the several available TV devices, specifically a Google Chromecast, an Amazon Fire TV Stick, and a Roku device, but have not yet tried the new Apple TV device. While each of the devices accesses some proprietary content, almost all of them access popular services such as Netflix, Hulu, Amazon Video, YouTube, and other media sources, as well as a huge selection of interactive games; be aware that channels such as Netflix and Hulu Plus have a monthly subscription fee typically starting at about \$8 per month, for almost unlimited access; users who have an Amazon Prime account (typically \$99 per year) can access tens of thousands of free movies and TV shows, as well as get free shipping and several

Continued on page 5

In Memory of Toni Hupp

June 30, 1927–December 17, 2015



Our club was saddened to hear of the recent passing of Toni. She was a vibrant and active member of our group and took over the reigns as president in 1999. Since then, she and her husband, Charley, have been residing in Kingman, Arizona. Everywhere she lived, she found ways to serve others. Toni was honorary regent of the National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution, Lewis Kingman Chapter, and founded the Boys Youth Ice Hockey Association in Dallas, Texas in 1970, which is still active today. She was President of the Republican Women's Club in Denton County, Texas, volunteer coordinator and office manager for U.S. Senator Phil Crane of Illinois, Girl Scout board member and troop leader, and founded the genealogical section at the Winnetka Public Library in Illinois.

Curtting the Cable (Cont. from page 4)

other “Prime” services from Amazon under that subscription. All of them offer a huge selection of both free and paid full length movies, TV shows, interactive gaming, and other content, as well as provide the interface to stream Netflix, Hulu, and other media sources directly to the TV without having to connect to a computer. All of these devices have a search capability along with an easy to comprehend menu system to assist in locating desired content.

Many of the major domestic and international news services offer free access to live and recorded news broadcasts; several financial news services also offer free access to their live broadcasts. There are thousands of independent TV stations, both domestic and international, and of every genre, that stream free to these devices. The number and availability of these channels is increasing at a rapid rate; I subscribe to the free email newsletter from one of these companies, Roku, which always includes a listing of the newly added free and paid channels. In the January 9, 2016 newsletter from Roku (RokuGuide.com Weekly Update), 31 new channels were added in the previous week alone. In an earlier weekly guide, it said that over a thousand new channels were added to the Roku streaming service in 2015, many of them totally free, but some



requiring a nominal subscription. Not unique in the industry, the competitive products from Amazon, Google, Apple, and lesser known third party device makers are adding new channels, both free and paid, at about the same rate. Many of the premium cable movie services, such as HBO, are now available on an “a la carte” subscription basis on most of the streaming services.

The basic streaming devices themselves are somewhat similar in size and cost, with more powerful and sophisticated devices available at higher prices. The first device that I purchased for about \$25 was a Google Chromecast, which was about the size and shape of a common USB flash drive with a rounded end, but had an HDMI plug on the end instead of a USB sized plug. The newer version of the Chromecast device is more “lollipop” shaped, has increased capabilities, available in several colors, and retails for \$35. The total installation was plugging the Chromecast

into an empty HDMI port on the back of the TV, and plugging in the included power adapter, and my Toshiba flat screen immediately identified the Chromecast device. Selecting the Chromecast from the “Source” menu using the Toshiba remote control, displayed the setup for the Chromecast. I entered my Gmail address and password (Google uses a single sign on for all of its services), and the password for my Wi-Fi, and I was connected. A simple menu displayed all of the available choices. I downloaded the Chromecast app to my smart phone, and used it as my remote control. Google describes Chromecast as, “Unlimited entertainment on a big screen. Chromecast works with the apps you love, like Netflix, YouTube, Google Play, Pandora, and thousands more. Choose from over 200,000 movies and TV shows, 30 million songs, sports events, and games.” The Chromecast being my first venture into the realm of the “Smart TV” was very impressive.

Several months after purchasing the Chromecast, Amazon announced a competing product, the “Fire TV Stick,” with an introductory price of only \$19 (now about \$35). Since I already had an Amazon Prime account in order to get free shipping on my Amazon purchases, users of the Fire TV Stick with a Prime account also get instant free access to thousands of free movies and TV shows, as well as other content. according to Amazon, “Fire TV Stick connects your HDTV to a world of online entertainment. With a huge selection of movies and TV episodes, voice search that actually works, and exclusive features like ASAP and Prime Music, Fire TV Stick is an easy way to enjoy Netflix, Amazon Video, Hulu, HBO NOW, low-cost movie rentals, live and on-demand sports, music, photos, games, and more. ... With over 3,000 channels, apps, and games, Amazon Fire TV Stick gives you access to all your favorite subscriptions and streaming services. Watch over 250,000 TV episodes and movies, including live TV. Kick back with sports, news, music, and games.” Also about the size of a common USB flash drive, with an HDMI plug on the end instead of a USB plug, the Amazon Fire TV Stick also included a dedicated remote control. As with the Chromecast, there is a free app for smart phones and tablets that is a fully functional remote control for the Fire TV Stick, plus the app also provides for real voice control, allowing the remote control to function on the user’s voice to search for content. Installing and configuring the Fire TV Stick took under two minutes, simply plugging it into an HDMI port, connecting the power supply, using the TV

Continued on page 6

5 Tips Every Windows 10 User Needs to Know

by Kim Komando (tip from 1/12/16)

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Microsoft has just revealed that Windows 10 is now installed on more than 200 million gadgets worldwide. It appears the gamble of offering free upgrades to existing Windows 7 and 8.1 users seems to be paying off. If you haven't taken advantage of the free upgrade offer yet, don't worry; you still have until July 2016.

Still, if you're planning on upgrading at some point, now is as good a time as any. Windows 10 has been around long enough the many of the early kinks have been worked out. If you're using a laptop, you'll still want to talk to your manufacturer to see if any compatibility problems have popped up, but for the majority of people it should be fine.

Of course, getting used to a new operating system takes a little time and effort. You have to relearn

some tricks, find out where familiar things have moved or get the hang of new features. We're going to help speed up the process.

Whether you're about to install Windows 10, or you've already been using it for a while, here are five tips you need to know. This covers taking control of the new Start menu, improving privacy, finding the traditional Control Panel, cutting down on notifications and more.

Take Control of the Start Menu

One of the biggest problems with Windows 10's predecessor, Windows 8, was the lack of a Start menu. Instead, Microsoft replaced it with a touch-friendly Start screen that left desktop and laptop users working with a mouse and keyboard out in the cold.

Microsoft wisely elected to bring back the Start menu for Windows 10, but it updated it with some of the good parts of the Start screen, such as "live tiles" for getting information from apps without opening them.

When you first install Windows 10, your Start menu will look something like this:



Continued on page 7

Curtting the Cable (Cont. from page 5)

remote to select the Fire TV Stick as an input (it showed up by name on the Toshiba TV screen), entering my Wi-Fi password, and entering my Amazon account information allowed for instant access to Amazon's extensive free and paid library.

My latest addition is from Roku, and is very similar in size, cost, and functionality as the other devices. Installation was similar to the other devices, very fast and easy. I did have to create a Roku account through the device, or the account can be created online. The quality and selection of content under Roku is excellent, with thousands of channels of content, both free and paid, including movies, TV shows, news, weather, games, and other content. There is no monthly fee to use Roku, but some of the content does have a rental fee (mostly recent movies), or a monthly subscription fee, much the same as the other devices.

My daughter in Dallas uses an over-the-air digital HDTV antenna, as well as a Chromecast,

to access her digital content. She chose to subscribe to Netflix for about \$8 per month. She has a separate fiber optic broadband internet connection, which she would have regardless of her entertainment needs, as she uses that fast broadband internet access for her job. Between the free local TV stations for news and weather, as well as the few network TV shows that she likes, and Netflix and other extensive content on her Chromecast, she claims to actually have more channels available than she previously had on her far more expensive cable service. She claims that even with her inexpensive Netflix subscription, she is saving well over \$100 per month compared to her prior cable service. She is one of the millions of cable and satellite users who have "cut the cable", and taken advantage of the new technologies that compete with cable and satellite TV services. This is very parallel to the millions of former hardwired telephone subscribers who cut the wire, and now use cost effective digital or wireless services rather than the often more expensive hardwired phone service.

With our rapidly changing technological environment, I wonder what we would "cut" next, as new technologies become available. We live in interesting times. ☺

Windows 10 Tips (Cont. from page 6)

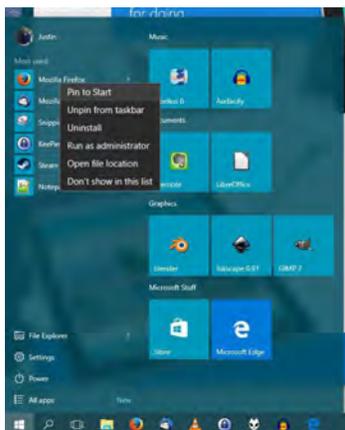
It has programs on the left with app icons on the right. Some of the app icons are the “live tiles” that update with new information, such as the current weather, new messages and more, automatically.

Of course, some of these you might not want to use, or you want your own app or program icons there. Fortunately, customizing is simple and flexible, as you can see from a customized Start menu in the pictures below.

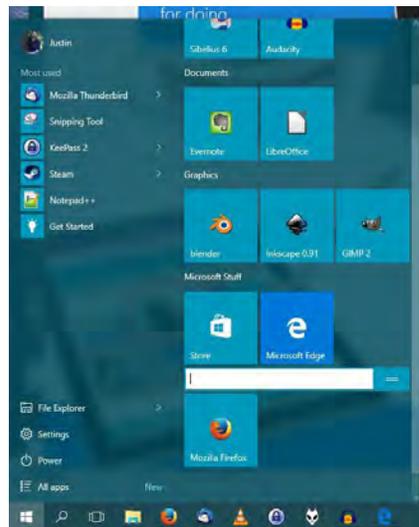
Simply right-click on any App icon to resize it or unpin it from the Start Menu. Selecting “Unpin from Start” takes it away. You can also uninstall programs with a right-click as well.



If you want to add an app to the list, you can click and drag its icon from the left column or right-click on an app icon and choose “Pin to Start.”



Once the icon is in the right-hand area, you can drag it around to exactly where you want. Putting icons close together lets you group them. You can name groups whatever you want, and you can move groups around by click the icon with the horizontal lines next to the name.



Don't forget you can click and drag the edges of the Start menu to make it larger or smaller. You can have it take up most of the screen, or very little space at all. It's your choice.

Make Windows 10 More Private

One valid criticism of Windows 10 is that it stores more information about you than previous versions of Windows. The personal assistant Cortana, for example, remembers everything you tell her, and keeps tabs on what you do on the computer so she can offer you better suggestions and recommendations.

Not everyone likes this level of data collection, and you can make changes to send Microsoft less. [Learn how to manually control your Windows 10 privacy.](#) You can also get programs that bring important privacy settings into one spot, such as Win10 Spy Disabler and AntiSpy.

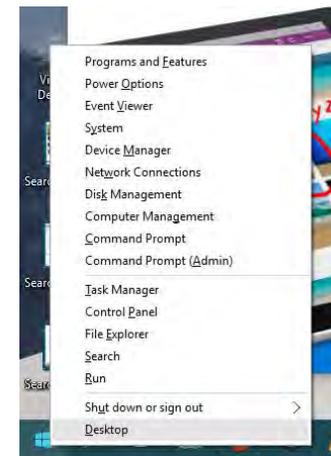
Visit the Old Control Panel

Windows 10 shipped with a streamlined Settings screen that won't be familiar to Windows 7 users. And it's more useful than the similar one in Windows 8.1. Here's what it looks like.



The new Settings screen is handy for the basics, but it doesn't quite have all the options you might want. Fortunately, you can get to the old Windows Control Panel with no problem.

Simply right-click on the Start button and select “Control Panel.”



Right-clicking the Start button is also a fast way to access other hidden areas you might want to use, such as the Device Manger or the Run command prompt.

Get Fewer Notifications

Windows 10 added a handy notification area, similar to what you find on smartphones. Simply click the notification icon in the lower-right corner and you'll see a list of new email, app update and more.

Continued on page 8

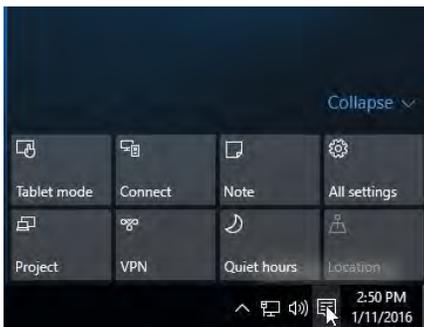
Windows 10 Tips (Cont. from page 7)

However, with lots of apps and Windows features using notifications, it can get cluttered fast, or just bug you with continual popups. Fortunately, you can choose what can use the notification area.

Go to Start>>Settings and click "System." Then go to the "Notifications & actions" area. Here you can choose whether or not to see Windows tips, app notifications, notifications on the lock screen and more.

If you scroll down you can turn notifications on and off for individual apps. For each app, you can also choose if the notification plays a sound or not.

When you click the Notifications button, you'll also see a list of Quick Actions at the bottom. Here you can set Quiet Hours when notifications won't bother you.



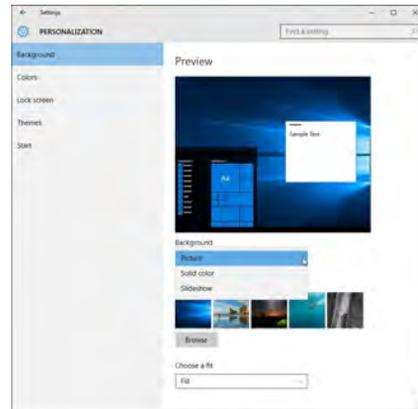
That's handy if you want notifications but only during certain times.

Get the Look You Want

OK, changing the colors and background picture in Windows might not seem that important, but you're looking at your computer for hours every day, so why not see something you like? A lot of people just live with whatever theme Windows has out of the box, but

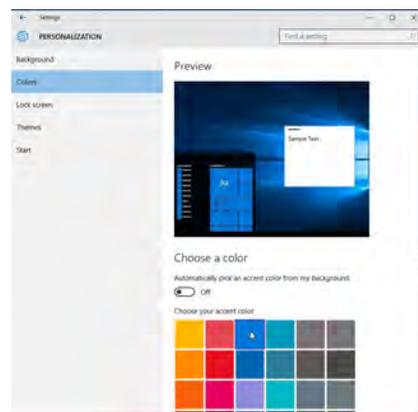
making your own is easy.

Go to Start>>Settings and choose "Personalization." Your first option is to change the Background. You can choose from a picture, solid color or slideshow.

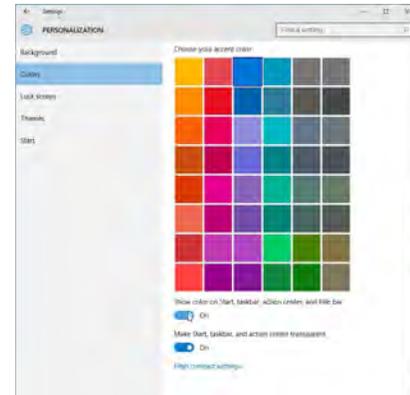


Windows 10 has some very nice default background pictures, or you can click "Browse" to choose your own. Be sure to choose a fit that looks good so the image isn't squashed and stretched. Fill, Fit or Center are safe choices.

Next you can go to the Colors area. Here you can pick your accent color.

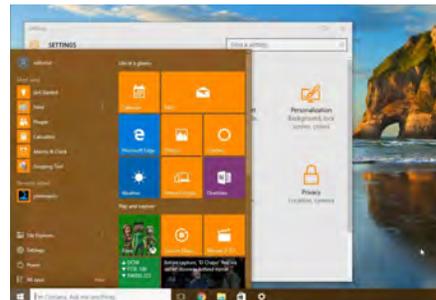


By default, this only affects a few icons and window borders. However, if you scroll down and turn on "Show colors on Start, taskbar, action center, and title bar," they will all take whatever color you pick.



Some other options include letting the computer pick a color based on your background image, which is great for slideshows, and making the Start menu, taskbar and notification area transparent. You can play around with those to see how you like it.

As you can see we decided to go with a nice beach scene and a bright orange color.

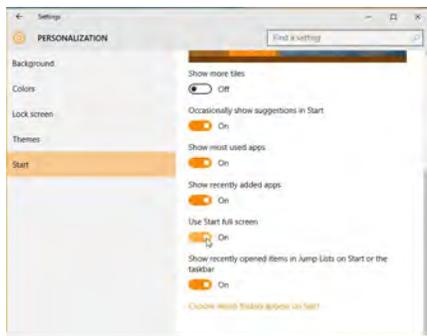


OK, not really. This is going back to something more subdued as soon as we finish writing this article.

Moving on, the Personalization area lets you customize the lock screen image and what shows up there; choose and save collections of backgrounds, colors and sounds as "themes"; and edit how the Start menu works.

Hint: If you got used to Windows 8.1's full-screen Start screen, the Start area is where you can get that back. Just turn on the "Use Start full screen" option.

Continued on page 9

Windows 10 Tips (Cont. from page 8)

What's your favorite Windows 10 trick that you've found? Let us know in the comments.

Have more questions about Windows 10? Hop on to the Kim Komando Forums and see what other people are saying. You can post questions and get response with a Kim's Club membership. 😊



New member Bill Abell gets mugged at the January meeting.

Interesting Internet Finds—November

By Steve Costello, President/Editor, Boca Ration Computer Society, FL, editor (at) brcs.org, <http://ctublog.sefcug.com>

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

The following are some items I found interesting during the month of November 2015.

Portable Apps, the Way of the Future?

<http://infolific.com/technology/software-worth-using/portable-apps-the-way-of-the-future/>

Portable apps have been a frequent topic at our user group meetings. This post provides information about portable apps, and how they have evolved.

How to Move OneDrive to Google Drive after Storage Cut

<http://www.makeuseof.com/tag/move-google-drive-onedrive-storage-cut/>

Now that Microsoft has announced the decrease in free OneDrive storage in 2016, you might want to consider alternatives with more free storage. The storage cut is explained more in depth, and an explanation of how to move your excess to Google Drive, are included in this post.

The Internet Archive's 'Wayback Machine' Will Soon Better Serve Your Nostalgia

<http://mentalfloss.com/article/70853/internet-archives-wayback-machine-will-soon-better-serve-your-nostalgia>

If you don't know about the Internet Archive's Wayback Machine, check out this post.

I use it frequently for my blog when a broken link shows up, and then link it to what shows up through the wayback machine search. Also check out the Internet Archive itself for much more.

Buying vs. Leasing: What's Best for Your Next Smartphone?

<http://www.pcmech.com/article/buying-vs-leasing-whats-best-for-your-next-smartphone/>

A lot of people are looking to upgrade this time of year. This post explores the pros and cons of buying vs. leasing a smartphone. Check it out for yourself to see which option is best for you.

Senior Tech: Sometimes Linux Isn't the Solution

<http://fossforce.com/2015/11/senior-tech-sometimes-linux-isnt-the-solution/>

A Linux advocate explains why Linux isn't always the solution for seniors. This is good advice regarding other operating systems as well; don't always assume because it is easy for you that it will be easy for someone else. Sometimes people just want things to work like they always have.

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

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

**GROUNDHOG
DAY**

February 2nd

P*PCompAS Newsletter
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Coming Events:

Next Membership Meeting: 6 Feb beginning at 9 am (see directions below)

Next Breakfast Meeting: 20 Feb. @ 8 am, Country Buffet, 801 N. Academy Blvd.

Newsletter Deadline: 20 Feb.

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

