Bits of Bytes

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

Volume XLII | October 2022 | Issue 10

Next P*PCompAS meeting: Saturday, 1 October 2022
APCUG speaker John Krout will teach us how to remove Android bloatware.

Meeting Minutes

by Greg Lenihan, P*PCompAS Secretary

President Cary Quinn opened the 3 September 2022 membership meeting at 9:06 am by wishing everyone a happy Labor Day weekend. David George made the coffee and Cary Quinn brought doughnuts and banana bread. A $1 donation is requested from members for doughnuts and coffee. A motion was made to approve the minutes in the September newsletter and the motion passed.

OFFICER REPORTS

Cary said the presentation today would be by Rob Truman. He will Zoom in between 10 and 10:30 am.

Secretary/Newsletter Editor Greg Lenihan announced the next newsletter deadline is 17 September. He asked if anyone had upgraded to Windows 11, because if a few were using it, he could add more Win 11 articles in the newsletter. Cary Quinn said he was going to try Win 11 soon.

Treasurer Toni Logan stated our savings account grew by another 12 cents and currently is at $2832.88. Nuvo submitted a receipt for a $13 extension cord. Checking stands at $21 for a combined total of $2854.62.

Membership Chair Ann Titus had nothing to report.

Librarian Paul Godfrey had nothing to report.

APCUG Rep/Webmaster Joe Nuvolini had nothing to report.

BOD Chair Ann Titus had nothing to report.

OLD BUSINESS:

Cary Quinn said he is still looking into a microphone solution for our meetings. He is looking into a phone solution with a headset.

A committee needs to be formed to solicit officers for next year. John Pearce mentioned a conversation at the Digerati breakfast, that for vice president, members have their names put in a hat, and would be responsible for one presentation. We could also do a “president of the month.” Ann Titus wants the Board to look at these ideas.

NEW BUSINESS:

John Linder asked for a motion to increase the meeting doughnut and coffee donation fee from $1 to $2 because the price of doughnuts has become so high. The motion passed, but after some Roberts Rules discussion, the motion is on hold until next month.

Joe Nuvolini messaged with Natalie at the church about obtaining a screen for our projector. Joe offered to help fund a screen if they wanted one. Our current setup may not need a screen. A measurement was taken of our projection on the wall and it was 4.5 feet by 9.5 feet. We will see how they respond with our idea of getting a screen. We gave the church $150 last year. We are budgeted to give them $300 this year.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The next social breakfast meeting will be Saturday, 17 September, at Perkins, starting at 8:00 am.

Our next membership meeting is Saturday, 1 October.

AROUND THE ROOM

Jeff Towne went to a John Williams concert.

Chuck Harris said some balloonists from the Labor Day weekend Lift Off were near his pasture. He also showed a picture of a helicopter he built years ago.

Ann Titus asked if anyone had set up emergency access to medical ID on their iPhone so others can access medical information. No one seemed to have done so.

Donna Armitage said that everyone has iPhones or Android phones, so she would like to see articles on setting them up.

Paul Godfrey asked if anyone was recording videos off the Internet. With Comcast, he can log in and play videos he has recorded

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In This Issue

Articles

P*PCompAS

Officers

President: Cary Quinn
cary.quinn@gmail.com

Vice President: Vacant

Secretary: Greg Lenihan
glenihan@comcast.net

Treasurer: Antoinette Logan
antoinettelogan@gmail.com

Staff

APCUG Rep/Webmaster: Joe Nuvolini
Barista: David George
Drawings: Cary Quinn
Editor: Greg Lenihan
Librarian: Paul Godfrey
Membership: Ann Titus

Committees

Audio: A.J. Whelen
Hospitality: Vacant
Programs: Vacant
Publicity: Vacant
Nominating: Vacant

Board of Directors

Ann Titus
Harvey McMinn
Joe Nuvolini (for Jeff Towne)
A.J. Whelan
John Pearce

President Cary Quinn leading the September meeting with Zoom attendees on the screen.

Our APCUG presenter, Rob Truman, at the September meeting via Zoom, talking about buying a PC.

Physcial attendees at the September meeting.

Digerati at the September breakfast.

What is E-mail Spoofing, and How Can You Protect Yourself?

by Sydney Butler, reprinted with permission from HowToGeek.com
Original article at: https://www.howtogeek.com/829504/what-is-email-spoofing/

E-mail spoofing is an attack where hackers make it appear that an e-mail originates from a different address than it does. Spoofing allows the attacker to impersonate people or organizations for various reasons. That's scary, so how does it work?

Why E-mail Spoofing Happens

E-mail spoofing is a form of impersonation, and usually, it forms part of a different type of scam or attack. Spoofing plays a major role in e-mail-based phishing or so-called 419 scams. An e-mail arrives in your mailbox purporting to be from your bank, an online payment processor, or in the case of spear phishing, someone you know personally.

The e-mail often contains a link you're asked to click, which takes you to a fake version of a real site where your username and password are harvested.

In the case of CEO fraud, or where attackers impersonate vendors or business partners, the e-mails ask for sensitive information or request bank transfers to accounts the hackers control.

How Spoofing Works

E-mail spoofing is surprisingly easy to do. It works by modifying the email "header," a collection of metadata about the e-mail. The information you see in your mail app is pulled from the e-mail header.

The SMTP (Simple Mail Transport Protocol) doesn't make any provision to authenticate e-mail addresses. So hackers take advantage of this weakness to fool unsuspecting victims into thinking the mail is coming from someone else.

This is a different form of e-mail impersonation, where the e-mail address is designed to resemble the real address of the impersonation target. In that case, the attacker creates a separate e-mail on the same domain and uses methods such as switching letters or numbers that look similar to each other in the fake address.

The FROM, REPLY-TO, and RETURN-PATH sections of an e-mail header can be modified without any special tools or advanced knowledge. This will result in an e-mail that, on the surface, shows you a forged origin address.

Detecting E-mail Spoofing

The easiest way to detect a spoofed e-mail is to open the email's header and check whether the header's IP address or URL under the "Received" section is from the source you expect it to be.

The method to see an e-mail's header varies from one mail app to the next, so you'll have to look up the exact method for your e-mail client. Here we'll use Gmail as an example since it's both popular and easy to do.

Open the e-mail you suspect is spoofed, click on the three dots, and "Show Original".

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Meeting Minutes (Cont. from page 1)

to his DVR. He was interested in screen capture programs. Greg Lenihan said he used the Ant Download Manager to copy videos and MP3s. He also uses a free Windows program called RecForth on occasion.

John Linder brought some blank DVDs and jewel cases to the meeting if the club wants to start raffles again. Cary said he would look over the material. He also has some LCD monitors he can bring to the meeting.

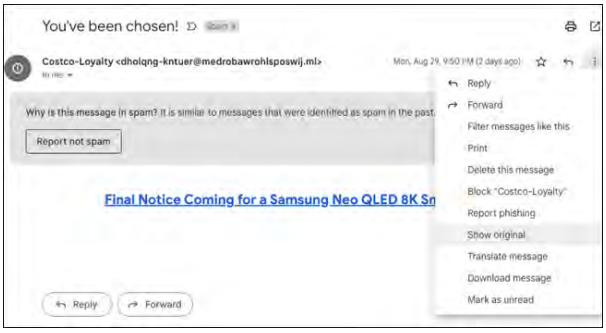
Toni Logan said due to last month's discussion on surge protectors going bad, she bought three new surge protectors with USB ports. Netflix has a program "Running with the Devil," that features John McAfee's lifestyle. Toni tried to change a Verizon account from one owner to another, and it took an afternoon. Toni also thanked Ann Titus for her newsletter article on "Saving Photos."

Cary Quinn has Roku TVs and he has them set up with Amazon Alexa routines because they are on the same network. The routines are set up with the Amazon Alexa app.

PRESENTATION

Rob Truman, an APCUG presenter, gave a presentation called "Buying Your Next Device," about buying a new PC, either desktop or laptop. If looking for a laptop, he recommends checking with the site www.laptoplist.com/laptop-finder. Rob's website is https://geezertek.us/ and his e-mail address is Rob@geezertek.us. ☺

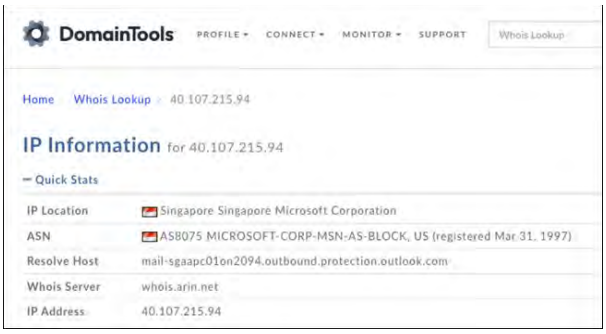
E-mail Spoofing (Continued from page 3)



Next to "Received" you'll see a server URL and also an IP address. In this case, an e-mail supposedly from Costco is coming from a server that doesn't seem to be from Costco.

To confirm this, copy the IP address and paste it into DomainTools's WhoIs Lookup.

As the results show, this IP address originates from Singapore and comes from a Microsoft domain.



It's highly unlikely it's really from Costco, so this is probably a scam e-mail!

How to Combat Spoofing

While checking the e-mail header of a message for suspicious content is a reliable way to confirm that an e-mail has been spoofed, you need to be mildly technical to understand what you're looking at, so it's not the most effective way to help people in your company or home avoid becoming a victim.

It's much more effective to apply a few basic rules when it comes to any unsolicited e-mail that asks you to click on a link, transfer money, or asks for privileged information:

- Double-check any requests for money transfers using another channel, such as a phone call.
- Don't transfer money into accounts that aren't approved.
- Don't click on links inside e-mails that you have not requested.
- Type any web addresses into your browser yourself.

Most importantly, always verify high-risk messages with the sender using a separate channel such as a phone call or secure chat. (Don't use any phone numbers provided in the e-mail, however.) A 30-second conversation can 100% confirm whether you're the victim of spoofing or not!

RELATED: ***How to Spot a Fraudulent Website*** ☺

Tip: Finding old online accounts

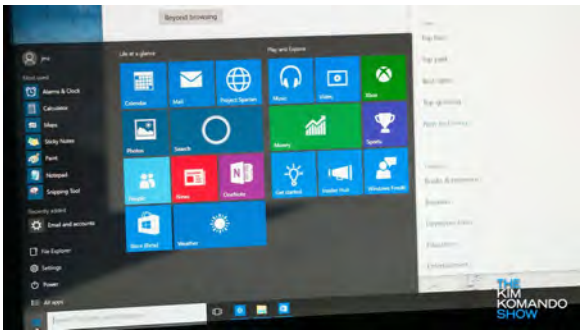
If you use Google Chrome, there is a way to find services you signed up for or accounts you created, and may have forgotten about.

Type **chrome://settings/passwords** into the browser bar and scroll down.

You may see a few accounts that you use regularly, but there are probably many that are unused. You may want to consider closing those obsolete accounts.

10 Bad Windows Default Settings You Should Change Today

by Albert Khoury at Komando.com (tip from 08/26/22)



Whether it's a smartphone, tablet, laptop or desktop, your devices come loaded with settings, apps and bloatware. They exist for many reasons: To give you a free tease of a paid program, to collect data or simply part of a deal with other companies.

Your iPhone is a wonderful piece of tech right out of the box, but you can take some steps to make it even better. **Tap or click here for 10 default iPhone settings you can change right now**.

Windows also comes with many preloaded settings that you don't need. Many of them involve programs or features you'll never use and can slow down your system. Let's go through 10 default settings you can change on your Windows PC.

1. Disable keylogger

With the Windows 10 keylogger, Microsoft observes what you're typing and saying and uses it to improve its service (Windows 11 doesn't come with this built-in feature). Do you need this Big Tech company recording everything you do on your PC? No! Here's how to put a stop to it:

- Go to the **Start menu** and open **Settings**.
- Select **Privacy**, then **Diagnostics & feedback** from the left pane.
- Turn off **Improve inking and typing** and **Tailored experiences**.
- Now tap **Delete** under **Delete diagnostic data**.

2. Distance yourself from Cortana

Windows 10 lets its productivity assistant Cortana get to know you through your voice and writing so you can get better suggestions. If this makes you uncomfortable, you can turn off the feature. Here's how:

- Go to the **Start menu** and open **Settings**.
- Click on **Privacy**, then choose **Inking & typing personalization** from the left pane.
- Click the slider to **Off** under **Getting to know you**.

RELATED: How to see everything Microsoft knows about you and shut down tracking

3. When was the last time you printed something from your PC?

Windows runs a print spooler service to keep your printing jobs running smoothly. Even when you're not using it, it's running in the background.

- If it's been a while since you printed anything, go ahead and disable the print spooler:
- Hold down the **Windows button + R** to open a **Run** dialog box.
- Type in **services.msc** and hit **Enter**.
- Scroll down and double-click **Print Spooler**.
- Change the **Startup Type** to **Disabled**.
- Click **Apply**.
- Under the tab for **Service Status**, click **Stop**.
- Click **OK** and **close the window**.

4. Unless you're running an office, you're probably not faxing anything

Do people still use fax machines? Well, yes, you'll find them in doctors' offices and such. But even if you need to fax something, there are apps for that. Here's how to turn off fax services:

- Hold down the **Windows button + R.**
- Type in **services.msc** and hit **Enter**.
- Scroll down and double-click on **Fax**.
- Change the **Startup Type** to **Disabled**.
- Click **Apply**.
- Under the tab for **Service Status**, click **Stop**.
- Click **OK** and **close the window**.

5. Bluetooth for your PC

You're probably using Bluetooth on your phone to control your smart home features, portable speaker, smart TV, or pair your phone to your car.

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Bad Settings (Continued from page 5)

Regarding your computer, the most common uses for Bluetooth are pairing peripherals such as wireless keyboards, headphones and mice. If you're not using any of these, you can turn off the feature:

- Go to the **Start menu** and open **Settings**.
- Click **Devices**.
- In the **Bluetooth & other devices** section, slide the toggle under Bluetooth to the left to disable it.

5. Wi-Fi Sense

Wi-Fi Sense shares your Wi-Fi network password contacts in Outlook, Skype and Facebook. Do you really need this exposure? No, you don't!

- Go to the **Start menu** and open **Settings**.
- Select **Network & Internet**.
- Click **Wi-Fi** from the left pane.
- Select **Manage known networks**.
- Toggle off **Connect to networks shared by my contacts**.

6. Change your default internet browser

Internet Explorer is dead. Your default Windows browser is now Edge. While uninstalling Edge is a complicated procedure (and Microsoft wants to keep it that way), you can change to a different browser:

- Go to the **Start menu** and open **Settings**.
- Select **Apps**, then tap **Default apps** from the left pane.
- Click the current default browser under **Web browser** and select the one you want to change it to.

RELATED: Sick of Google Chrome? 6 alternative browsers to try instead

7. Get rid of those Start menu ads

Microsoft places ads and suggested apps in the Start menu. If you don't plan on ever using these, you can get rid of them:

- Go to the **Start menu** and open **Settings**.
- Choose **Personalization**.
- Select **Start** from the left pane.
- Toggle off **Show suggestions occasionally in Start**.
- Now open the start menu and right-click any apps or ads you don't want.
- Select **Uninstall**.

8. Disable programs at Startup

Windows comes with many preloaded programs, not all of which you'll use. And some of those are set to open whenever you boot up your computer. You can stop this and give your PC a nice performance boost.

- Go to the **Start menu** and open **Settings**.
- Select **Apps,** then **Startup** from the left pane.
- Click on the slider next to each app to disable or enable it.
- Check the impact level to see how much or how little an app affects your startup process.

9. Remote desktop services expose you to hacks

If you have a problem with your computer, tech support can connect to your system to start troubleshooting. It's helpful but leaves your PC open to cybercriminals as well.

You can turn it off now and benefit from a nice boost in processing power. You can always enable it if needed. How to disable remote desktop services:

- Type **Remote Settings** into the search bar next to the **Windows button**.
- Select **Remote Desktop Settings**.
- Toggle the switch to **OFF**. (**NOTE**: Not all editions of Windows 10 support Remote Desktop Settings.)

10. Touch keyboard and handwriting panel services

Touch keyboard creates an on-screen interactive keyboard for you to type with. The handwriting panel allows you to write with a stylus. Unless you need this adaptive assistance, it's safe to go ahead and keep these services from consuming processing power that can be better used elsewhere.

How to turn off the touch keyboard and handwriting panel:

- Type **Ease of access keyboard** into the search bar next to the Windows button.
- Select **Ease of access keyboard settings**.
- Toggle the switch under **Use your device without a physical keyboard** to the left to disable it.
- Type **Handwriting input** into the search

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What Browser Should I Use in 2022?

An ever-changing landscape looks pretty good right now

By Leo A. Notenboom, https://newsletter.askleo.com; published under the Creative Commons License

It's difficult to go wrong when selecting a browser these days.

What browser are you using, and is it the latest and most secure one?

I'm the wrong guy to ask that. As I type this, I have four different browsers running.

I'm an edge case (no pun intended).

However, if you're looking to run only one browser, the news is pretty good.

It would be difficult to go wrong using the latest versions of any of the major browsers, including Google Chrome, Microsoft Edge, Mozilla Firefox, Brave, Vivaldi, Safari, Opera, Pale Moon, and Konqueror. If you have issues with a specific browser or company, try a different one.

Chromium

Before we get into specific browsers, I want to point out that many browsers are related and may not be quite as different as you think.

A browser "engine" is the underlying technology used to display webpages. Many different browsers share the Google Chromium engine. Then they can focus development efforts on other features, like user interface, synchronization, and more.

The reason this matters is that all browsers using Chromium should, in theory, display webpages the same way. If you're diagnosing a webpage display problem, switching from Chrome to Edge may not tell you anything because it's the same engine underneath.

Chromium-based browsers

The following browsers are all based on Chromium:

- Chromium (the default browser in many Linux installations)
- Google Chrome
- Microsoft Edge
- Brave
- Vivaldi

They differ in outward appearance and additional features. For example, Brave is specifically privacy-focused, Microsoft Edge is well integrated into the Windows ecosystem, and Google's own Chrome is designed to work well with all Google properties and services.

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Bad Settings (Continued from page 6)

bar next to the Windows button.

- Select **Handwriting Input Panel Settings**.
- Uncheck the box labeled **Write in the handwriting panel with your fingertip**.

Bonus: Turn on file extension names

Malware is an ever-present threat. If you're connected to the internet, you're exposed. Do you run new apps and files without a second thought? You're putting yourself at risk.

Most PC malware is written as an executable file or .exe. Not all executable files are harmful, of course. Your favorite PC games, for instance, run on executable files.

A major red flag to watch for is a file that masquerades as one file type but is, in reality, an .exe. Say you download concert tickets. The file may be named "concerttickets.pdf," but upon closer examination, you see the path is actually "concerttickets.pdf.exe."

This is a common hacker trick. Foil their efforts by setting up your PC to reveal the file extension for any file next to its name. So, instead of seeing Solitaire and Meeting Notes on your desktop, you'll see Solitaire.exe and Meeting Notes.doc.

Setting file extensions always to display is easy:

- Open a folder and click **View** at the top. Check off the box marked **File name extensions**.

It's always worth checking file types, especially if you're downloading something from an e-mail or online. Make sure it's what you expect by right-clicking on the file and selecting Get Info. If that PDF isn't really a PDF, don't open it! ☺

Best Browsers (Continued from page 7)

Other browsers

The following browsers generally use their own underlying engine — or engines which, while perhaps open source, aren't shared by as many well-known browsers.

- Mozilla Firefox. The Thunderbird e-mail program and SeaMonkey application suite also share a significant portion of Firefox code.
- Safari, from Apple
- Opera
- Pale Moon
- Konqueror (an alternative browser in many Linux installations)

When diagnosing issues with Chromium-based browsers, it's a good idea to try one of these since they use different technologies.

But which one should I use?

First, the latest versions of all the mentioned browsers are the most secure.

If you're particularly concerned about privacy, use Brave.

If you want maximum website compatibility, try Google Chrome. It's been the most popular browser for some time.

If you're looking for maximum integration with Windows or you just don't want to download another browser, use Microsoft Edge.

If you happen to like the features offered by a specific browser, use that one. Any of the browsers I've listed above will do just fine.

If you have problems

No browser is perfect. Some people swear certain browsers are complete junk, based on their experience. You'll hear that from different people for each of the browsers I've listed above.

Similarly, some people will swear that this company or that is completely evil, and you shouldn't trust the browser they provide.

And, of course, you may experience problems — either with a specific browser or with a specific website used with a specific browser.

My advice in all these cases is simple: try one of the others. As I said, any of them will do. Heck, have more than one installed and ready if you like.

But what do you use?

OK, ok… here's what's running on my machine right now.

- Microsoft Edge. Call this my primary browser, as it's where my personal email and general web browsing happens.
- Google Chrome is where I isolate my Ask Leo! email and work; I'm typing in it right now.
- Mozilla Firefox. I use this to isolate my volunteer work and e-mail accounts. (And occasionally test things, since it's the only non-Chromium browser I have installed.)
- Brave. I've been using lately this to keep an extra window open for streaming music so I don't lose my place or accidentally shut it down when one of the other three browsers needs to be restarted.

Why so many? In general, it's to keep Google accounts straight. While you can sign in to multiple different Google accounts within a single browser, I find it easier to keep things completely separate by using separate browsers.

Do this

If you're not sure, just use whichever browser you feel most comfortable with of those mentioned above. If you're still not sure, use what's pre-installed on your system: Edge on Windows, Chrome on Android, and Safari on Apple products.

The browser landscape does change. Even five years ago, my answers would have been different. ☺

Your Free Tech Support Toolkit

By Bob Rankin, http://askbobrankin.com, published through the APCUG

A well-prepared adventurer never goes anywhere without his trusty Swiss Army knife. Similarly, you need a portable arsenal of troubleshooting tools to solve common computer problems. Load these free tech support utilities on a USB flash drive and your friends and family will think you're a tech support superhero! Read on for your tech support toolkit...

Portable Tech Support Software Utilities

When writing this article, I was reminded of an old friend at IBM who was an avid spelunker (cave explorer). He always wore boots to work, because, he said, "You never know when a cave might pop up in the machine room!" It's also true that you never know when your laptop, or a friend's computer, may start acting up.

All of these handy programs are free, but they also share another important common factor. They don't require any installation, because they're designed to be portable. The ability to run them directly from the USB drive is important for several reasons. First, on a badly infected system, sometimes you can't even install new software. A virus may be blocking the introduction of new software, or the Windows installer may be broken. Also, some programs require administrator privileges to install, which presents a hurdle if the admin password is unknown.

#1 -- Malware infection (viruses, spyware and other nasties) is one of the most common problems. Some malware even disables the security software found on the infected hard drive. In such cases, a portable antimalware program stored safely on a USB drive is a lifesaver. Emsisoft Emergency Kit Portable is a free malware scanner and remover for Windows 7/8/10 that can be run from a USB drive without installing it on the target system. Emsisoft Emergency Kit will scan your computer for viruses, spyware, adware, keyloggers and other malicious programs.

#2 -- If you run into a problem that Emsisoft Emergency Kit can't fix, check out my article Offline Malware Scanners for details on a class of anti-malware tools that will clean up malware infections on systems that won't even start Windows.

#3 -- One form of malware that's particulary difficult to detect and remove is the rootkit. On infected systems, it can't hurt to use a dedicated rootkit removal tool such as Kaspersky's TDSSKiller Portable. Just remember this isn't a substitute for a full anti-virus tool.

#4 -- If your hard drive appears to be mangled, don't give up hope before trying TestDisk. This powerful portable utility can recover lost hard drive partitions, and fix problems with drives that won't boot up. TestDisk will analyze your disk, partitions, boot sector, and can help you recover deleted files, and even rebuild scrambled file systems.

#5,6 -- Some programs cannot be uninstalled by the Windows "Add/Remove Programs" function. For those stubborn clingers, try the Revo Uninstaller program. Note the link to the portable version at the bottom of the download page. If you are trying to rid a brand-new system of all the unnecessary junk programs that came installed on it, try the free Bulk Crap Uninstaller utility.

#7 -- In cases where Internet Explorer or Edge is not functioning, and no other browser is installed, the portable version of Chrome or Mozilla Firefox will help you get access to the Web, so you can find diagnostic information, updated drivers, or any additional software you may need. Since they run from your flash drive, the portable browser won't leave anything behind (cookies, history, cache) on the machine where you run it. You can also customize the portable version with your bookmarks and extensions.

#8 -- In a similar vein, if Microsoft Word or Excel is totally hosed (or no office suite is installed) the portable Libre Office will do very nicely as a substitute. Libre Office is drop-in replacement for MS Office, including a word processor, spreadsheet, presentation tool and other utilities. It can even read and write MS Office files.

#9 -- I can't count the number of times I've been away from my computer, and needed to edit a photo or other type of image file. IrfanView is a handy graphic viewer and editor, supporting many file formats, basic editing (crop, resize), effects (sharpen, blur), screen capture and other image management features.

Hit the Reset Button

For badly borked systems, you may be tempted to just hit a big red Reset Button and start from scratch. It's possible to restore your computer to that shiny just-out-of-the-box condition, but I recommend caution. ☺

P*PCompAS Newsletter
Greg Lenihan, Editor
4905 Ramblewood Drive
Colorado Springs, CO 80920
e-mail: glenihan@comcast.net

Coming Events:
Next Membership Meeting: 1 October beginning at 9 am (see directions below)
Next Breakfast Meeting: 15 October @ 8:00 am, Perkins, 3295 E. Platte Ave.
Newsletter Deadline: 22 October
Check out our Web page at: http://ppcompas.apcug.org