SUPERCOM COMPUTER CLUB TECH TIMES

Objective:

To bring the latest technology news to you, our members. Tips and suggestions will help you to keep your device(s) running smoothly and help you be aware of threats. Technical tips will be coming to you through our Technical Committee.

Committee Members: (Pictured Below)

Ben Tarbell, Mike Gerkin, Peggy Bullock, Jim Mills, Rick Heesen, Lowell Lee, Steve Andreasen (Apple/Mac), Jim Oliver & Keith Kuchar & Sandy George (not pictured).   Dick Strong.
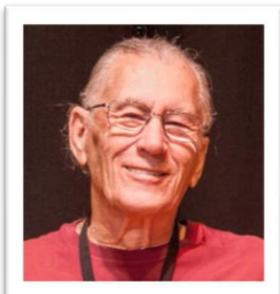
Dick Strong is elder Geek whom we call on for input on tough problems and suggestions from the sidelines. He has earned his "time off".

New Members **added in 2018-2019 were Keith Kuchar and Sandy George**.

Greetings

The summer is gradually coming to an end. I have neglected to send out multiple Tech Times during the summer, so this one might get a bit long. Hopefully you will check out the articles included from our Tech Committee. They have some excellent tips for you for over the summer.

Sorry I have "taken quite a bit of the summer" off. It's been a busy one, thankfully not with Bill this summer, but with other family members.

So, put on your reading glasses and let's get started with your summer education!

Remember…………DO YOUR MAINTENANCE TO YOUR COMPUTERS DURING THE SUMMER!!

Remember --- <u>**All links in our Tech Times Newsletter are safe to click on**</u>.

Hopefully you have added this new email address specifically for emailing members. It is peggytechtimes@gmail.com. When you receive this email, make sure you add it to your contacts so that it does not go to your Spam folder.

****
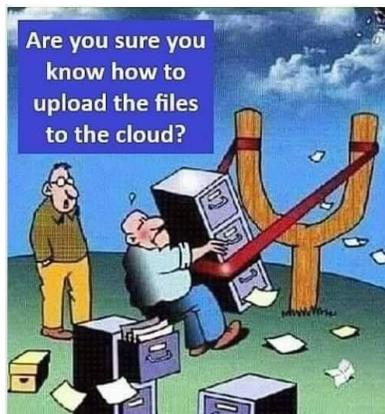
<u>**Submitted by Rick Heesen**</u>:

Most of you have transitioned to Windows 10, but some of you may be in the early stages. This is a great article if you don't like the looks of what Windows 10 looks like when you fire up your computer. As always, you can customize it to suit your wants, needs and desires. Delete things you don't want or use and organize things in an area that you use all the time. Have fun:

10 Ways to Customize the Windows 10 Start Menu

****

<u>**Submitted by Rick Heesen:**</u>

WOW! How many of you have a cap on your data? Do you know what your monthly allowance is? How can I make sure I don't go over that cap or, if I don't have a cap, how can I cut back on how my

data is used? Those of us using a MiFi or Jet Pack, know what this means! You may not have a limited amount of data, but things sure slow down after you hit a certain usage.

Check out this article for some great tips:

How to Avoid Going Over Your Home Internets Data Cap

****

<u>Submitted by Rick Heesen</u>:

Another great article from How to Geek & Rick:

How to Test Your Internet Connection Speed or Cellular Data Speed

****

<u>Submitted by Mike Gerkin</u>:

Here is a link to a free Ask Leo guide that is well written and a timely guide to staying safe on the Internet.

https://med.askleomedia.com/pdf/InternetSafety-v4-Free.pdf

This warning appears after clicking the above link: Since it came from Mike Gerkin, I trusted him and have also used Ask Leo, so I clicked OK. Because this is a 92-page guide, you might want to download it to your computer and read it at your convenience or refer back to it when you have a question.

****
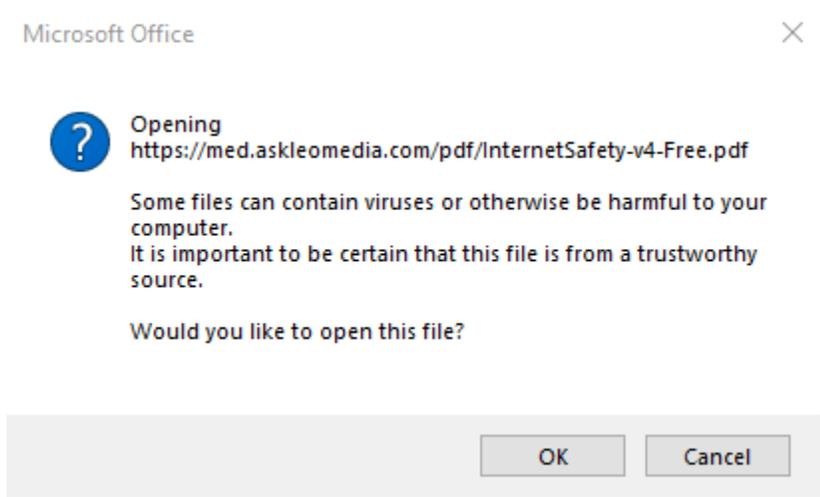
<u>Submitted by Mike Gerkin:</u>

It's so great to see Mike still has a sense of humor in his writings! The geeks got one this past week telling us we think he was a bit bored! He was even watching YouTube videos watching grass grow! 🤣🤣🤣😁😁

Thanks Mike!

I share a problem with thousands of other computer users in North America. I have too many old computers.

I don't have too many old cars. It is possible to trade an old car when I am looking for a new one. Or at least offer it for resale. I can't do that with an old computer.

I am not talking about a compatible PC or Mac that you bought last year or a couple years ago. I'm talking about computers that are "only" 10-15 years old.

I find I sometimes have kept a car almost that long if it's a good one without any significant operating or maintenance problems. I once had a car that was more than 20 years old. Even the 20-gauge shotgun I got in 1953 works fine and I will eventually give it to my son.

This summer I had to get rid of four old computers and two printers. I couldn't sell them. In fact, I had trouble giving them away.

They were perfectly good, functional, and useful machines. They all originally had excellent word processing and software for gaming, spreadsheets, and tele-communication that really worked.

Today, very few people want them. Let me explain why.

Two of the computers were originally Windows XP operating systems that were new in 2001. They came with a 300MHz processor and 128MB RAM. They had 20GB hard drives. The monitors were 15 inches. Both had floppy disk drives. And I can toss in several boxes of floppy disks. I will admit Microsoft no longer supports XP, but I had "upgraded" these a couple of times. Even the old printers still "worked" but were not compatible with newer systems.

Well, by now you have guessed that maybe I have held onto these machines too long. Technology progress, obsolescence, and the increasing rate of change in the world has caught up with this "old" guy.

To me a machine is never junked if it works, if it continues to do the job for which it was designed, and if someone in the big world still has a job that the machine can do. Heck, autos, airplanes, and even old telephones usually are junked only when they quit working and when repair parts and services become unavailable. I still have a rotary phone!

I guess I have been raised by depression era parents where if it isn't broken you don't fix it or throw it out. But even I didn't have a need for them and no one wanted them. I suppose somewhere in the world there is someone who could use them, but searching the world to find them is probably beyond me.

The SuperCom Geeks learned this year that all those old, unwanted computers that SuperCom members have donated in the past are no long wanted even by the Boys and Girls Club. There does

not seem to be a home just waiting to recycle or utilized our "old" computer stuff anymore. Jim Oliver had to search around for places that would accept them.

Since your Geeks remove all personal information from any donated devices for security and identity reasons before we pass them on as a service to our SuperCom members, we probably will continue to accept your retired devices. But you will have to check that out next season to see if conditions have changed.

Golly, isn't it just awful to get old?

****

Submitted by Mike Gerkin:

We have always known that the automatic updates to Windows 10 could cause some older computers to fail to remain compatible with the latest update for the Windows 10 operating system (OS). Some of the older computers that were originally using a Windows 7, 8.0, or 8.1 OS before being upgraded to Win 10 simply do not have the necessary components, power, or storage to accommodate the more powerful Win 10 OS.

This likely will not be a problem for most users except for the very older computers with small capacity disk drives, or some of the tablets and light weight devices with a very small GB storage space.

The new minimum space requirements beginning with the 1903 update (tentatively end of May 2019) will be upped from 20GB to 32GB for both 32-bit and 64-bit versions of the operating system. If you have a lot of programs on your computer and not an abundance of disk space, you may find that you will not be able to install the up-coming 1903 update with its increased space requirement.

If it happens that your system does not have the needed extra space and cannot be upgraded, then we assume it will be permanently stuck with the 1809 update until it expires in May 2020. While you have options of installing a larger capacity hard drive or even an SSD, by that time you may decide to turn in your older computer and obtain a brand-new fresh device that will have a lot more power and compatibility. Avoid those devices with small disk storage space like some with only 16GB, 32GB, and even 64GB where apps and OS will eat up much of the space.

If you want to learn more about what is required by Microsoft, you can link to their Minimum Hardware Requirements page for more information. Especially note the space requirement section at 3.3 Storage.

****

Submitted by Mike Gerkin:

Windows keeps a record of everything and that includes information, warnings, and errors that occur while you are using the system. Wouldn't it be nice to see all this information in one tidy graph? Well, you can and today's *SuperCom Quick Tips* article will show you how to use the Reliability Monitor which is where all the troubleshooting goodness resides.

You can open the Reliability Monitor this way:

1. Click the Windows **Start** button
2. Type **reliability**, and click on the **View reliability history** option at the top of the list

That should bring you to a window that looks similar to this one:

First off, if you see a whole passel of red Xs, then it's definitely time to make a full backup. *File History* and *System Restore* do not qualify, sorry. The Reliability Monitor is a great way to troubleshoot software and hardware problems, but an occasional check here will maybe show you problems you weren't even aware of.

You can click on any of the icons indicated in the above image to get more information about it. Here, I have clicked on the single red *X* in the monitor and have discovered that Windows was not properly shut down on that date and at that time. Operator error maybe? I don't remember…

You will notice in that lower panel that there is a link to the right of each entry labeled **View technical details**. A more useful bit of information this time would be the *Warning* which tells me that there were a couple of Windows Update failures. Using the failed-update warning as an example, clicking that link brings up a window like this:

This gives us important details about the update that failed. In this case, it was an Adobe Flash Player update on a Windows 10 v1809 system and it even gives us the Knowledge Base (KB) number. This makes it very easy to nail down the failed update and correct it. Checking your Windows Update History will give you the needed information for doing this. Often the failed update will safely install without any intervention.

Note: *You can get back to the main window by* clicking *the back-arrow button in the Menu Bar of this screen.*

I check the Reliability Monitor a couple of times a month. You never know what's going wrong in the background that you're not aware of and Windows is kind enough to keep track of it for you.

Conclusions

The Reliability Monitor is a valuable tool for both troubleshooting problems and for keeping an eye on your computer for any creeping crud that is trying to sneak by. It should definitely be part of your self-defense arsenal. To read more on the Reliability Monitor use this link to a Windows Report page [Windows Reliability Monitor](#)

As always, if you have any helpful suggestions, comments or questions, please share them with us,

Your SuperCom Tech Team

Source: Thanks to Richard Pederson

****

Submitted by Rick Heesen:

Are you hearing a lot of people talking about the new 1903 Windows 10 update? Haven't gotten yours yet?

(From Peggy Bullock: Well, neither have I. I need to go somewhere where I have faster Internet connection that won't use up all my data on my MiFi. One of these days. But I know it's available because it tells me that when I check my Updates for Windows. So far, it's my choice to download because I am on a metered connection.)

Here is some information on why people aren't getting the new 1903 update yet. Check it out to see if this include you:

https://askleo.com/why-havent-i-received-the-latest-windows-10-update/?awt_l=4m769s&awt_m=JhxXA3_w9pdfbL&utm_source=newsletter&utm_campaign=20190507&utm_medium=email&utm_content=featured

****

Submitted by Rick Heesen:

FCC warns of increasingly popular 'One Ring' scam

Curiosity killed the cat

By [Shawn Knight](#) on May 8, 2019, 10:40 AM

Bottom line: Scammers will stoop to any level to swindle a buck as evident by an increasingly popular tactic that preys on people's curiosity. Simply put, if you don't recognize a number you received a call from, don't call it back. If it's important enough, they'll leave a voice message.

The Federal Communications Commission recently issued an alert to consumers regarding an increasingly popular robocall scam. Odds are, you've probably already experienced it for yourself.

The scam, dubbed "One Ring" or "Wangiri," is exactly as it sounds and plays on the curiosity of the consumer. An automated robocaller calls your phone but only lets it ring once or twice. Intrigued, the recipient will call the number back at which time the hook has been set as the return call runs up a toll which the scammer gets most of.

The FCC said such calls often happen in bursts in the middle of the night. Recent reports indicate they are using the "222" country code for the West African nation of Mauritania although because the technology to spoof such calls is readily available and cheap to obtain, they could be coming from anywhere.

The commission recommends not calling back numbers you do not recognize, especially those that appear to originate overseas. It's also not a bad idea to check your phone bill for charges you don't recognize. What's more, if you never make international calls, the FCC suggests talking to your phone company about blocking outbound international calls to prevent accidental toll calls.

As always, you can file a complaint with the FCC when you receive a spam call.

Lead image courtesy marketinggraphics via Shutterstock

****

Submitted by Rick Heesen:

Thought thus might be an interesting read for our club members.

Has a Hacker Really Hacked My Email Account? - Ask Leo!

https://askleo.com/has-a-hacker-really-hacked-my-email-account/?awt_l=4m769s&awt_m=JeRN3U0UrpdfbL&utm_source=newsletter&utm_campaign=20190521&utm_medium=email&utm_content=featured

****

Submitted by Mike Gerkin:

And another on the subject of Email Hacks:

One of our Tech Squad members recently had their email account attacked. Multiple messages were falsely sent out with a request to reply. But the reply address was invisibly modified to a spammer address. Anyone who foolishly did send a reply quickly received another message back asking for a gift card purchase. Some SuperCom members did receive at least one of these messages.

We have not yet discovered just how the original attack was conducted or the identity of the crook, but the attack created lots of confusion and many serious consequences.

There are several ways that your email account (or any online account) can be compromised:

- System server hacked (like Yahoo has been)

- Password brute-force

- Session hijacking

- Phishing

- Guessing secondary questions (Did you forget your password route?)

- Using the same credentials on another site that was hacked

- Malware installed on computer

So, to keep this from happening, here are some pointers:

- Use a strong, unique password. There are numerous password managers available to help with this.

- **<u>Always log out when you're done checking your mail, and don't browse around on other sites while you have an active session open</u>**.

- Don't be caught by phishing scams, and don't give your username/password to ANYONE including to people you might think are legitimate (a secret is something known by just one person).

- Give difficult-to-guess answers to your security questions.

- Change your password every once and a while.

- Scan your computer every once and a while.

- Be extra careful when browsing on public wireless.

Most of you SuperCom members should know this stuff, but there might be someone who will benefit from a kind reminder and save yourselves a lot of headaches.

****

<u>Submitted by Rick Heesen</u>:
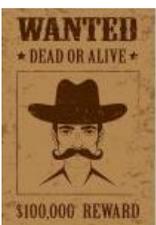
Are the Bad Guys Winning?

Well the poster and the title make you wonder! Let's see what the article has to say:

https://askleo.com/are-the-bad-guys-winning/?utm_source=newsletter&utm_campaign=20190611&utm_medium=email&utm_content=featured

****

Submitted by Mike Gerkin:

For those of you who have gotten the Update to 1903 for Windows 10, if you are having a problem with a blurred screen, here is a tip from Mike:

With the new Windows 10 update to Version 1903 Build 175, I found that all of those colorful and interesting scenes that appeared at my sign-in had become blurry and now were just a background of swirls and colors.

If you want your beautiful scenery images back again, there is an easy fix. Open your **Settings** with the small gear icon in the lower left (or **Windows Key + i**). Click on **Personalization**, then **Colors** on the left. Finally turn **Transparency Effects** to **OFF.** This should return your pictures back to you to see again.

****

Submitted by Rick Heesen:

Won't these creeps ever stop?

Daily News Roundup: Houdini Malware Targets Your Bank Account

A new variant of Houdini Malware is making the rounds. Through a combination of phishing tactics and link clicks, it tries to install and scrape bank account details via keylogging. As always, use caution when checking emails "from your bank."

The Houdini worm itself isn't new, and technically it's a RAT, not a worm. But recently the Cofense Phishing Defense Center identified a new variant targeted at stealing online banking credentials. The attackers converted the original code from a Visual Basic setup to Javascript and started a phishing campaign earlier this month.

Targets receive an email purporting to be from their bank with instructions to click a link to finish a financial transaction. Clicking the link leads to a download of malware which…………….to continue reading Ctrl + Click to follow the link:

https://www.howtogeek.com/fyi/daily-news-roundup-houdini-malware-targets-your-bank-account/

This concludes the summer Tech Times Newsletter. Remember…. if you have any questions or problems during the summer……First – GOOGLE; Second – check the website and contact one of our Tech Committee Members!

Also, a reminder to you photo buffs,,,,,,, one of the categories next year is photos from your home territory! Get those cameras clicking!! I know there is beautiful country everywhere! I have traveled all over the world this summer, just looking at everyone's pictures on Facebook. Places I will never see in person, but gorgeous just the same.   pb

Have a great "rest of your summer"!!

Rick Heesen, Mike Gerkin and Peggy Bullock