



# THE WYSIWYG



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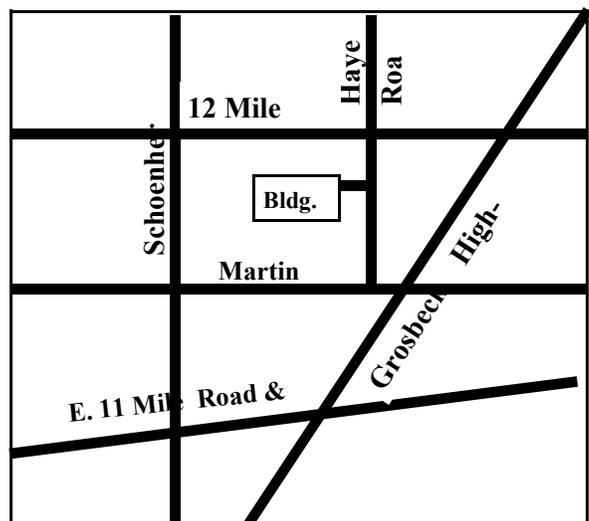
**STERLING HEIGHTS COMPUTER CLUB**

PO Box 385

Sterling Heights, MI 48311-0385

## MAIN MEETING: TUESDAY Oct 1 7:30PM

Macomb Community College  
South Campus  
14500 E 12 Mile Road, Warren  
John Lewis Community Center  
(Building K)  
(Enter from Hayes Road)



Nominations for new club officers - election upcoming in November

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**This Month's Main Meeting Topic:**  
 "Smart devices" presented by Eric Hayes, IT Coordinator and Webmaster for the Royal Oak Public Library

### SIG Meeting:

In November -  
7:00 at the  
Sterling Heights  
Public Library

(The SIG will plan to meet every other month, at this location, if people continue to attend.)

### Sterling Heights Public Library

The Sterling Heights Public Library, at 40255 Dodge Park Road, is located just south of Utica Road. A large sign reading "City Center" marks the driveway to the library and parking. The Programming Center, where the meeting is held, is just inside the front door of the library.



Guests and visitors are welcome. People can attend any SHCC meetings during two consecutive months before deciding to become a member or not. Meetings include the main meeting and SIGs. July and August don't count since there is no main meeting. Membership includes admission to all SHCC functions and the newsletter. Membership is open to anyone. It is not limited to the residents of Sterling Heights.

**DUES: \$25/YEAR**

**CLUB ADDRESS:** PO Box 385, Sterling Heights, MI 48311-0385  
**CLUB E-MAIL ADDRESS:** Info@SterlingHeightsComputerClub.org  
**CLUB WEB PAGE:** http://www.SterlingHeightsComputerClub.org

### Resource People:

Family Tree	Rick Schummer
Firefox	Don VanSyckel
FoxPro	Rick Schummer
General Computer Questions	Jack Vander-Schrier
Hardware	John Rady
MS Publisher	Rick Kucejko
MS Word	Rick Schummer
Spreadsheets	Rick Schummer

### SHCC Coordinators:

Associate Editor	Rick Schummer
Door prizes	Sharon Patrick
Greeter for visitors	Lindell Beck
Newsletter publisher	Rick Kucejko
Windows SIG	Jack Vander-Schrier
Program Coordinator	Jerry Hess
Publicity	Patrick Little
Resource People	open
SIG	Jack Vander-Shrier
Welcome & check-in desk.	Jim Waldrop
Web Page	Don VanSyckel
WWW column	Paul Baecker

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Rick Schummer	586-254-2530	rick@rickschummer.com
Don VanSyckel	586-731-9232	don@vansyckel.net
Jack Vander-Schrier	586-739-5952	jvanders@comcast.net

(Call Jack after noon)

### 2013 SHCC Officers

V. President: John Rady  
 Treasurer: Paul Baecker  
 President: Don VanSyckel  
 Secretary: Rick Kucejko

### Four Month Meeting Schedule:

#### OCTOBER 2013

1 - SHCC- "Smart devices" presented by Eric Hayes, IT Coordinator and Webmaster for the Royal Oak Public Library

2 - COMP meeting  
 13 - SEMCO meeting  
 ? - SIG meeting

#### NOVEMBER 2013

5 - SHCC- Main Meeting  
 6 - COMP meeting  
 10 - SEMCO meeting  
 ? - SIG meeting

#### DECEMBER 2013

3 - SHCC- Main Meeting  
 4 - COMP meeting  
 8 - SEMCO meeting  
 ? - SIG meeting

#### JANUARY 2014

7 - SHCC- Main Meeting  
 1 - COMP meeting  
 12 - SEMCO meeting  
 ? - SIG meeting

### Other Computer Clubs:

As a member of SHCC, you can attend meetings of other clubs where we have reciprocating membership agreements, at no charge.

#### Computer Club of Marysville and Port Huron (COMP)

Time: 1st Wednesday, 7:00PM  
 Place: Mackenzie Bldg, Room 201, St Clair Community College, Clara E McKenzie Library-Science Building, 323 Erie St.  
 Port Huron, (810) 982-1187  
 Web Page: http://www.bwcomp.org  
 Reciprocating: Yes

#### South Eastern Michigan Computer Organization (SEMCO)

Time: 2nd Sunday at 1:30PM  
 Place: The Engineering Society of Detroit 20700 Civic Center Dr. Southfield, MI 48076 Suite 450 4th Floor  
 Web page: http://www.semco.org  
 Reciprocating: Yes

#### The OPC (Older Persons Commission) Computer Club

Time: Every Tuesday at 10:00  
 Place: OPC in Rochester 248-656-1403.  
 Web page: www.opcseniorcenter.org go to "Site Map", then to "Computer Club" for club information.  
 No cost for residents to join or attend meetings. \$150 fee for non-residents, (full facility usage) or \$1 per meeting.  
 Reciprocating: No

Newsletter submissions are due 10 days before the club meeting, but the earlier the better. They should be sent to :

WYSIWYG Publisher  
 5069 Fedora, Troy, MI 48098

OR at the e-mail addresses: newsletter@SterlingHeightsComputerClub.org



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## The President's Pen

by Don VanSyckel



If you weren't at the September meeting, you missed a really good one. Mr Stephen Legler from Microsoft presented "Windows 8.1 Usability - Leveraged for Touch and Non-Touch Devices". Mr Legler did a great job and Win 8.1 didn't look so daunting.

The USB 3.0 board in my desktop misbehaved (see last month and how USB 3.0 is now an integral part of my desktop system) and I thought possibly I should look for another PC with 'native' USB 3.0. I looked around and decided I'd check to see what was available refurbished. There are two stores that have presented at SHCC, Aardvark and Micro Center. I checked Aardvark and was surprised to find them out of business. When I checked Micro Center's web site it listed quite a selection of refurbished PCs. The issue with the Micro Center listings is that very few of them listed the PC specs about the USB ports and many didn't list USB ports even as a feature.

I did eventually find one with USB 3.0 ports. Actually it had two USB 3.0 ports and four USB 2.0 ports. I suppose my keyboard and mouse can limp along on USB 2.0 ports. I'll just have to type slower. The issue with this PC though is that it came with Windows 8.0. I was hoping it would have Windows XP Professional (many of the refurbished PCs come from a lease program and leases are generally with a business which generally uses Windows XP Professional.) I was impressed enough with last month's presentation to take a chance.

It only took five minutes to decide to put Windows XP Professional on the PC and I would have right then but I wanted to make the backup disks first. Well, this started another adventure. The PC doesn't make a backup disk, it makes a backup thumb drive. The thumb drive needed to be at least 16 Gb and fortunately I had one. After

three hours I ended it. I tried another thumb drive and again ended it after about three hours. This time there were not as many files as the first time. I had an idea. I have a two inch USB extension cable and I used it to connect one of the thumb drives. I did this because the extension has a narrow USB plug and I noticed that the chassis cut out for the USB 3.0 sockets didn't provide much clearance. This time after 15 minutes the program reported it was done. I took this as proof that the lack of clearance with the chassis cut out was causing the one thumb drive to not work at all and the other to work in some intermittent mode.

During all the waiting I was doing I had another thought, after all last month's presentation was Windows 8.1 not 8.0, so I decided to wait for the 8.1 update next month. Then if I'm no happier, it's Windows XP Professional. I'll take my chances after next April when Microsoft stops supporting XP. It's worth it for the usability and lack of aggravation.

I'll have to see how this all works out.

This month should be another dynamite presentation. Mr Eric Hayes from the Royal Oak Library will be presenting. Also don't forget the PIG SIG at 6:00 before the meeting. It's across Hayes at Travan's.



## Last Month's Meeting

The September meeting was really good. Mr Stephen Legler from Microsoft presented "Windows 8.1 Usability - Leveraged for Touch and Non-Touch Devices". Mr Legler did a great job and Win 8.1 looked pretty good.



## SHCC Emergency Cancellation

The Sterling Heights Computer Club might find it necessary to cancel an event if the weather gets bad enough. All members of SHCC have an email address. One of the SHCC officers will send an email to the addresses SHCC has on file alerting members to the event cancellation. Decisions will not be made before 4:00 PM and decisions will be made by 6:00 PM for the regular 7:30 PM meetings. If weather is questionable an email confirming that the event is NOT cancelled might be sent, so please carefully read any SHCC announcement about events. If your email is broken, call an officer. Don't leave a message, call another officer if you don't talk to someone live. It is your responsibility to keep the email you have listed with SHCC current.



## Door Prizes

The SHCC offers door prizes at most regularly scheduled club meetings. In September the winner's circle included:

**Virginia Chojnowski** won Star Office 8 software

**Lindell Beck** won Component Video Cables

**Jane Minnick** won a Photoshop magazine

**Mike Bader** won a Roku

**Martee Held** won a Red Hat Linux 9 Bible

**James Waldrop** won Picture-it software

**Ralph Osinski** won a TR-1 tape

**Richard Katnik** won Photoshop software



## Club Officer Election Announcement

**I**t is time to re-elect our officers. Here is the process, the jobs, and responsibilities:

The nomination process is simple. You can nominate yourself or have another person nominate you for one or more of the offices. All the offices (president, vice-president, secretary, and treasurer) are elected for a one year term starting in January and completing in December. Nominations are taken in October and just before the elections in November. You must be a member to be nominated or to nominate someone.

The elections are usually held at the regular meeting closest to November 1st. This year they were delayed for a month. The easy way to remember this is that we hold our elections on the same night as the local and national elections are held, in years when there is a national election.

Only members of the SHCC can vote. Ballots will be handed out at the sign-in door. The elections are held during the business portion of the meeting. The person with the majority of the vote for the office is the winner, for each office.

The jobs of each office are flexible. Some are defined, some change from office to office depending on the officers' capabilities and availability. In reality the president makes sure the meeting topics are set, the speakers are prepared, writes thank you notes to presenters and door prize contributors, runs the regular club and officer meetings, publishes the minutes to the officer meetings, takes phone calls from potential members and sends information to them, audits the monthly treasurer report and membership databases, tracks door prizes, and handles most of the publicity issues for the club. The WYSIWYG column is optional, but a great forum to pass along information

to the members. The president also makes sure that the different coordinators are appointed and do their jobs. The president enforces the constitution and Club's policies. The president does whatever things cannot be done by anyone else. The key to this job is delegation. The more the president delegates the less there is to do.

The Vice President has the catch all job. So far to date the vice-president has not had to step in for the president, and there have not been any state funerals that they have had to attend. This is an important job. The person must be flexible and be prepared to run the regular and officer meetings if the president cannot attend. This officer usually picks up a project or two during the year to lift the burden from other officers. Presently the vice president arranges for our meeting speaker, but help is available as needed.

The secretary maintains the membership database which is tracked in an Access database. They also put together "New Member Packets" and give them to newly joined members, and members who renew. These packets are already printed, some assembly required! The secretary audits the treasurer report to make sure that the membership money collected matches the membership counts in the database, print the mailing labels for *WYSIWYG* mailing, and maintains several reports such as a membership list and attendance sheet. The secretary makes sure that sign-in table materials needed at each regular meeting are there before the meeting, and before people start showing up.

The treasurer maintains records for all the money taken in and paid out from the Club's checking account. The SHCC currently uses Quicken to track the funds and generate reports for the officers. The treasurer also audits the

membership counts. The treasurer makes reports to the officers at the officers meeting and four times a year to the Club's membership. All the receipts are collected and maintained by the treasurer.

All the officers attend the officer meeting that takes place during the week after the club meeting. It starts at 7:30PM; time and date are flexible to the liking of all officers.

We hope everyone considers this invitation, this call to service. It is some work, and it is a lot of fun. Normally it takes 3 to 5 hours a month (give or take a few hours) outside of the meetings. The president's job might take a little more, but remember that delegation can lower the burden. If you have any questions concerning the duties, feel free to give any of the officers a call.



## Presenters Wanted

**T**he officers invite any member to make a presentation at the main meeting.

If there is some software you have been using and think others may be interested as well, or there is a computer topic you would like to present to other members, please call or e-mail Don VanSyckel. Making presentations is not that difficult. The hour goes by before you know it and there is always enough material to cover in a software package so that the hour is easy to fill.

If there is a topic you are interested in or something you would like demonstrated, please see any of the officers. They are always interested in what the members would like to see.



## External Storage

by Dick Maybach, member, Brookdale Computer Users' Group, NJ  
www.bcug.com n2nd@charter.net

Although we use external storage much less than in the early days of home computing, it is still an essential technology for backing up internal hard disks, exchanging files among different computers, and expanding storage capacity. The increasing size of files had made obsolete many older technologies, and those that are still attractive fall into four types: electronic, optical, magnetic, and Internet.

There are many variations of electronic storage, but two are now dominant, USB memory sticks and SD cards. They have similar capacities with current "sweet spots" (capacities where the cost per byte is lowest) of around 16 Gbytes, although this is continually moving up. SD cards are typically faster, but appear to be less rugged with exposed connections and thinner packages. I have carried a naked USB memory stick in my key case for many years, and it has never failed, but I always keep my SD cards in their plastic cases. USB sticks have the further advantage that every computer has USB connectors, while SD access is less common, and although memory card readers available are very cheap, they also have low quality and often are unreliable. The circuits used for electronic storage do have finite lifetimes, in that they wear out after a (very large) number of writes; however, the risk is negligible for external storage devices.

Optical storage is problematic, because much the available media is of poor quality and may begin to develop errors in just a few months. Even high-quality media rapidly deteriorate if exposed to high heat or humidity. For more on this, see my article, Using DVDs for Long Term Storage, BCUG Bytes, June 2008, available at <http://www.bcug.com>. Actually, my own experience with CD-ROMs and DVDs has been good, although I'm

careful to use only quality media. Of the dozens stored at home, some for several years, I've had problems with only one, which can be read only on the drive that created it. On the other hand, the outer tracks of several music CDs stored in my car are no longer playable. Another problem is the low quality of CD-ROM and DVD drives, with Blu-Ray being especially bad. Blu-Ray drives are acceptable for play-back, but their lasers frequently burn out after writing just a few discs. This is unfortunate, as the capacities of CD-Roms and DVDs are rapidly becoming too low to be really useful.

If you use optical storage for archiving, consider using the free program *dvdisaster* (<http://dvdisaster.net/en/>) for Linux, OS-X, and Windows, which adds error-correction and thus allows you to recover your stored files, even though up to 20 percent of the bits on the medium are corrupted. You need a disk-burning program that can create a file (called an iso-image) that is a bit-for-bit image of a CD-ROM or DVD and also has the ability to copy an iso-image to an optical medium. The procedure for creating an error-resistant disk is the follows.

- Use your disk burner to create an iso-image, which must be at least 20 per cent smaller than the capacity of the medium.
- Use *dvdisaster* to add error-correcting data to the iso-image. The screen-shot below shows this in progress. After creating this image, click on the *Verify* button to check that it's good.
- Finally, use your disk burner to write the iso-image to the optical medium.

Periodically scan your optical media (using *dvdisaster*'s *Scan* button) for

errors. If they begin to appear, recover the data using *dvdisaster* (which will produce an iso-image), create a new disk, and discard the one with the error. Until the medium begins to develop errors, you can read it like any other disk using your usual software.

Magnetic storage, in the form of external hard disks, offers high transfer speed and high capacity, making it attractive for many applications. It is also has the lowest cost per byte. To achieve this performance, these devices are assembled with very tight clearances, which means they must be sealed against air-borne contamination. The magnetic disks cannot be separate from the motor and head assemblies, making these devices much larger and less rugged than electronic storage devices. Here, you have a choice of interfaces with USB being the most common, followed by E-SATA. USB-3 drives are beginning to appear, but are considerably more expensive than USB-2, although this will surely change, probably soon. Diskettes are now obsolete, for good reasons. Their capacities are tiny, and their reliability is low. You can still buy drives, but their quality is very poor, with many delivered dead-on-arrival or failing very quickly. If you still have valuable data on diskettes, you should transfer it to a better medium soon.

Internet storage, commonly called "the cloud" is expanding rapidly. Modest capacities, up to around five Gigabytes, are widely available without charge. Transfer rates can be low, often just a few tens of kilobytes per second, and of course, the storage is available only if you have an Internet connection. There are also concerns about how secure the data is and whether it will continue to be available if the vendor goes out of business.

Which of these approaches you use depends on your application. For synchronizing the data among your own computers, Internet storage is the most convenient. Once you have set it up,

the contents of the synchronized directories are always identical, no matter which computer you use to make changes. Since the information resides on every PC, you lose nothing if the cloud vendor discontinues the service.

For transferring files between your PC and a friend's, a USB memory stick (up to a few Gbytes) or a USB hard disk (for larger transfers) is the best choice. Almost every computer has a USB port, so your friend doesn't need to install any special software or hardware to affect the transfer. I always carry an eight-Gbyte USB memory stick, formatted as FAT-32, in my key-case, and I've never found a computer that couldn't read from and write to it. (Actually, my stick has two partitions, a seven-Gbyte FAT-32 one for transferring files, and a one-Gbyte Linux one containing Parted Magic. See my article *Parted Magic: Lots of Disaster-coping Tools*, BCUG Bytes, April 2012, available at <http://www.bcug.com>. This means I always have the ability to transfer files and a tool kit to solve computer problems.)

For backing up your PC, and external hard disk is the only reasonable solution. These feature high capacities, fast transfer rates (especially if equipped with a USB-3 interface), and high reliability. Their bulk and relative high fragility are not serious problems in this application.

External hard disks are also good for archiving things like photos and financial data, but you could use DVDs, provided you add error-correction using and store them in a benign environment. For added security, consider making more than one copy, and either transfer the information to new media every few years or periodically scan it for errors using *dvdisaster*. Archival storage is an especially difficult problem. Computer technology is changing fast, and you must stay alert lest you lose the ability to access your archives (as happened to me when 5 ¼ inch diskette drives disappeared from PCs). For example, if you used *dvdis-*

*aster* to safeguard your archived DVD, you must be sure not only that the program runs on your new PC, but also that it uses the same methods as those used to record the data, and of course the new PC must be able to read DVDs.

For sharing photos or files with friends, Internet storage is hard to beat, although mailing them a DVD or CD-ROM also works well, especially if they want to show the pictures to their friends.

To expand internal disk storage capacity, the preferred solution is an external hard disk with an E-SATA interface, although USB-3 is not a bad solution. Most likely, you would use E-SATA for a desktop, since it requires

an expansion card, and USB-3 on a laptop (USB-2 if your laptop is older or not top-of-the-line). Mac owners could consider Firewire or Thunderbolt.

As you can see, there is no single solution, unlike in ancient times when diskettes were universal (or if we go back to near pre-history, cassette tapes, audio tapes, punched paper tape, or even punched cards). However, there is a good and inexpensive solution for every application.

*This article has been obtained from APCUG with the author's permission for publication by APCUG member groups.*



## SkyDrive & Office Web Apps

by Lynn Page, Editor/Webmaster, Crystal River Users Group, FL  
[www.crug.com](http://www.crug.com) [lp46@tampabay.rr.com](mailto:lp46@tampabay.rr.com)

**W**ith a Windows Live ID you have access to Microsoft's Office Web Apps. This lets you open, edit and share Word, Excel and PowerPoint documents online using SkyDrive. So you can work with your documents from any computer whether it has the Office applications installed on it or not. Go to <http://skydrive.live.com> in a web browser to log on or sign up for a Windows Live account.

Store Office documents on SkyDrive to view and edit them in a browser. Or share documents stored on SkyDrive by linking to them in an email, blog or social network.

Save to or Upload to SkyDrive Documents generated on your home computer can be saved to SkyDrive or uploaded. Use Save & Send to save an existing Word, Excel, or PowerPoint file. Select Save to Web, Sign in to your Windows Live Account, and then click OK. Specify a folder on SkyDrive, and click Save As. Type a name for the file and click Save.

I think it is easier to create the document save it on the hard drive and then upload it to SkyDrive. In the SkyDrive menu bar click Upload. Then either drag and drop files from your Documents folder to the upload box or browse to and select them for upload. To open a document in SkyDrive, select the folder where document is saved, and click the file name.

### Create New Documents in the Web Browser

With the Office Web Apps you can create Word, Excel or PowerPoint files right in a web browser. The Office application doesn't have to be open or even installed on the computer.

Sign into SkyDrive and click the kind of document to create in the Create drop down menu. In the dialog box type a name for the document and click the Create button.

A new document opens for editing in the appropriate Web App. Simply create the document as you would in the Office application. The Web App will

not have the full features of the Office 2010 application but is familiar.

### Share Files on SkyDrive

SkyDrive allows you to share your Office documents, photos and other files. You can share individual files or an entire folder. In SkyDrive locate the folder or file to share and place a check in the selection box. Click Sharing on the Menu bar. The default method of sharing is by email. This lets you give specific people permission to access and even edit your files. Add the email addresses for those who will be reviewing the files, add a message and click the Share button. To access the document the recipients must have an account or create one.

The Post to option places a link to your SkyDrive files on a social media service like Facebook. I wouldn't choose this method of sharing as it is open to any of your friends or their friends if they repost.

The Get a link sharing option creates a link you can send to others. The advantage is they do not need to have a SkyDrive account. The disadvantage is that anyone with the link can access the file. I would use the View only option for sharing a link. It allows anyone with the link see the file. The View and Edit link allows anyone with the link to see and edit the shared files. If you select Public sharing anyone can search for and view the public files.

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### Organize/Manage SkyDrive

SkyDrive storage can be managed in a similar way as Documents on your hard drive. A new SkyDrive account will have three folders: Documents, Pictures and Public.

Create new folders with the Create drop down menu. Folders can be nested within these three main folders or added on the main file location. Go to the location to add a folder, click Create and select Folder from the drop down menu. Enter a name for the folder and it is all set for storing files. The path to the files or folders is shown in the title bar. The number in the bottom right corner of a folder shows the number of files it contains.

If you change your mind about how folders should be organized you can move them. To move a folder, go to it in SkyDrive. On the Mani menu click Folder actions and select Move folder to from the drop down menu. In the dialog box add a new folder or select the location to move the folder.

The Manage drop down menu is used to manage files. It allow for renaming, deleting, moving and copying files. The trick is that you must go the folder containing the file and place a

check in the selection box. That opens additional commands on the Menu bar.

To move the file place a check in the selection box (top right corner), click Manage in the Menu bar and select Move to in the drop down menu. In the dialog box select the location for the file to be moved.

### Word Web App

The Home tab contains basic text and paragraph formatting including Styles.

The Insert tab is used to insert tables, pictures, clip art and links. To insert a table in the Insert Table drop down point to the number of rows and columns and click.

Clicking the Picture icon opens Windows Explorer to select a picture to insert into the document. Browse to and select the picture and click Open. The picture is uploaded and inserted into the document.

Clicking the Clip Art icon opens a search box. Type in a description and click the search symbol. Browse through the clip are pieces, select one and click the Insert button.

Once a picture or clip art has been uploaded a Picture Tools Format tab appears when the graphic is selected. Tools are available to Grow or Shrink the picture and add a Picture Style.

The Page Layout tab specifies page setup and paragraph indent and spacing. Page Setup options include margins, page orientation and size.

Save the document when it is complete. Clicking Save on the File tab saves it on your SkyDrive. Clicking Save As allows you to download a copy and save it on your hard drive.

### Excel Web App

The Home tab has font formatting and alignment, number formatting and table formatting. The Cell commands allow for insertion or deletion of rows, columns, cells and new sheets. The

Formulas group includes the commonly used functions. The Data group can refresh the workbook connections and recalculate or search the workbook to Find something.

Insert Functions, Tables, Charts and Links from the Insert tab. The number of charts available is limited but sufficient.

The View tab has only two options. You can use the standard Editing View or choose Reading View to look at the data without toolbars.

### PowerPoint Web App

When creating a PowerPoint presentation on the web app there a very limited number of themes. In the first dialog box chose a theme. There are also four customize buttons that change the color scheme. Once the theme has been set and the Apply button clicked a new presentation opens.

The Home tab has the Clipboard, Slides, Font, Paragraph and Drawings groups. The font and paragraph formatting commands are limited to the basic functions. The number of shapes is limited but you still have styles, fill and outline. I like the new Delete group as it provides one click option to delete a slide.

The Insert tab has a New Slide button to open the dialog to select a slide style to add to the presentation. Adding pictures and clip art is same as in the Word Web App. Shapes and SmartArt are added in the Illustrations group.

The Text group contains the Text Box icon.

The Design tab offers the same themes and variations shown in creating the presentation. So if you decide that the selected theme isn't working change it to one more suitable. Set the animation on the slide and timing or reorder the animations on the Animation tab. Slide transitions are limited to none, fade and push and are controlled on the Transitions tab. The View tab has three Presentation Views as well as Notes and Comments. The Editing View is the normal view you would use in PowerPoint with slide icons for selecting or sorting and the active slide pane. The other options are Reading View and Slide Show.

*This article has been obtained from APCUG with the author's permission for publication by APCUG member groups.*



## Ten Ways Your Smartphone Camera Can Make Life Easier

by Guy McDowell, Writer, MakeUseOf.Com  
<http://goo.gl/LB6u1>

"Does your phone have a camera on it?" said no one since 2005.

**N**obody even asks how many megapixels your phone's camera has anymore. With the ubiquity of smartphones today and the resolution of the cameras they have in them, why does anyone even sell a point-and-shoot digital camera anymore? All you need is a decent smartphone to take your vacation pictures and click a button to upload them to

Facebook, Pinterest, Tumblr, wherever.

### 1. Take a Picture of Your Kids

Yes, those of us blessed with the fun-sized versions of ourselves take pictures of our kids constantly. We do this so we can see them grow, and remember those moments that we seem to only cherish after the fact. Those pictures are almost priceless.

However, it is your children that are priceless. If you are going to a big outing, perhaps an amusement park, or even the mall, take a picture of them. Don't say you did this in case they get lost or abducted - that would just create unnecessary fear. Take the photo as if you were just capturing the moment they arrived at your recreation destination. Now you have a photo of exactly how they look and what they are wearing on that day. Even if they should just happen to wander to the toy section in the store, you can share that photo with store workers or security guards to help find them. This tip alone will make your life easier and less stressful.

### 2. Where Did These Come From?

If you need to take something apart to try to repair it, use your phone camera to take a picture of the item BEFORE you get after it with a butter knife. Take pictures at every stage of the disassembly. Now you have something to guide your reassembly efforts and jog your memory as to where each part belongs. Plus, should you feel the desire to share your handiness on the Internet, you have documentation of what you did. You never know, you might be the first person to find an easy way to fix something and help someone else.

### 3. Why I Was Late For Work

Recently, where I live was hit by a winter storm named Nemo. Which was a good name for it, because after all the snow fell and the winds drifted over anything that stood still, you would have a hard time finding anything. Our one car sat through the storm, dutifully waiting to be driven until today. When I went out to the car, I knew I would have to shovel around it and maybe put some traction sand down. That went all fine and dandy, but backing out over the rest of the driveway proved difficult. The car slid on the ice and ended up in a bit of a snow bank. So, I took pictures. Yes, that's my car in the picture. I got to work on time, but had someone questioned me, I could show them what I was up against.

#### 4. Can You Tell Me What Your Computer is Doing?

Many of us are familiar with the Print Screen button and using screen capture software, and may have even used them to document a computer issue. Those tools are fine for systems that are functioning properly. Then there are those systems that just won't let you do anything. Take a picture of the screen and e-mail it from your smartphone to whomever is trying to help you with your computer. Instantly, they will see what you see. (Yes, that's my computer screen.) With that information, the rate at which they can fix the problem has just increased rapidly. This tip applies to just about any malfunctioning device really.

#### 5. Nice Layout. Too Bad About the Lighting.

If you're a budding photographer, use your phone to take pictures of potential subjects at different times during the day, or even the year. Take pictures of your subject from different angles and different distances or viewpoints. This will help you to understand how the natural lighting and environment affects your subject.

#### 6. But Mark and Spencer Has This Item for 5p Less!

People are finally getting a little smarter about their shopping habits and not willing to just pay whatever the store wants. Your smartphone camera can go a long way in helping you to negotiate a lesser price. Of course, there are the fancy apps that allow you to use the camera to scan barcodes or QR codes and compare prices at different retailers. Unfortunately, those only work on items with codes that actually have information in the application's database. But if you can take a picture of the item showing its price, you now have proof you can use with that store's competitor to get the price that you want.

#### 7. What Was The Phone Number For That Car For Sale?

Most people buy used cars, and many buy them from someone who just

wants to sell their car. So when you're out and about looking at cars, take pictures of it with the cellphone. Take pictures of the 'for sale' sign so you have the name and number to call and any other information written on it. Take pictures of as much of the car as you can including dents and dings. That will help you in negotiations. You might come to a tentative deal on the phone, then show up later and the car has a new ding. Now you can prove that it does and push lower.

#### 8. It Wasn't Like That When I Sent It

Recently we shipped a friend's car out west. The shippers broke the spoiler on the car. Had we thought to take a picture of the car before they loaded it, we could have made our friend's life easier. They could have easily shown that the car was fine before it went on the truck. This little trick can apply to ANYTHING that you ship. As another example, some manufacturers now take pictures of each shipment before it goes out the door. You can see the waybill, bill of goods and the items in the shipment. This protects them, and you, from things going missing.

#### 9. Ibid

Are you a college or university student? Are you doing lots of research in the reserved or special collections? Whip out the cell phone, take pictures of the relevant pages as well as the ISBN, Cover and the Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication page. Now you can use that information to properly annotate and document your research, at your leisure. The book called, "Wireless Networking in the Developing World" is a good read, look it up. Man, I wish I had that when I was in school. Back then photocopies were sometimes as much as 50 cents a piece and you can't photocopy a lot of the ancient texts that I used.

#### 10. How Did That Get In There?

Kids put weird things in weird places. Two of those places are the nose and ears. With the cellphone's flash on,

you can use the camera function almost like a scope to see what they've done now. Of course this works for adults too, if there's maybe an ear infection or an abscessed tooth. It's your camera. Where you put it is up to you!

#### But wait, there's more...

We could go on all day about different ways to use your smartphone camera to make your life easier or simpler.

- Don't have a mirror handy while trying on fab hats? Take a picture!
- See something you'd like to get your spouse, but you're not sure if they'd like it? Take a picture!
- See someone driving a car and reading a book at the same time? Take a picture!
- Trying to lose weight and need to keep a food log? What do you think you should do? Yes, take a picture!

*This article has been obtained from APCUG with the author's permission for publication by APCUG member groups.*

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## PIG SIG

**J**oin fellow club members for a light supper and casual conversation before the next club meeting at Travan's Restaurant, on Hayes, across from our meeting location. It starts at 6:00, and ends in time to get to the meeting. This great eating and fellowship meeting is referred to as "The PIG SIG."

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**If your e-mail or mail address changes, please e-mail: [secretary@SterlingHeightsComputerClub.org](mailto:secretary@SterlingHeightsComputerClub.org)**

## WYSIWYG WEB WATCH (www)

by Paul Baecker [webwatch@sterlingheightscomputerclub.org](mailto:webwatch@sterlingheightscomputerclub.org)



This column attempts to locate sites containing valuable, amusing and free content, with no overbearing pressure to purchase anything. Send your favorite entertaining, helpful or just plain useless sites (a description is optional) to the e-address noted above, for inclusion in a future WYSIWYG issue.

Organize a local group or find one of the thousands already meeting up face-to-face with interests and hobbies like yours.  
<http://www.meetup.com>

Places that have passed into obscurity, lesser known subjects of historical interest, and the more shadowy corners of the world. Over 400 pictorial collections of abandoned vessels, vehicles, aircraft, places, more.  
<http://www.urbanghostsmidia.com>

Hilarious bunny suicides comic collection.  
[http://blog.jimm yr.com/Hilarious\\_Bunny\\_Suicides\\_Comic\\_14\\_2008.php](http://blog.jimm yr.com/Hilarious_Bunny_Suicides_Comic_14_2008.php)

Rare classic cars from the 30s as well as classic American cars, all with lots of chrome. Also, rare autos at various international car shows – Talbot, Alfa, Delage, Ferrari, more.  
<http://www.cromoclassico.com>

Go back to personal finance school with courses that will have you building your portfolio in no time. No need to register to read the valuable contents. Stocks, funds, bonds, and portfolio categories, with many short courses in each.  
<http://news.morningstar.com/classroom2/home.asp?colId=397&CN=COM>

Fee & free woodworking plans, free tutorials, how-to's, project ideas, & shop tips.  
<http://www.binkyswoodworking.com>

Two galleries of Fillmore Theatre music concert posters from the late 60s.  
<http://www.thescreamonline.com/art/art3-2/fillmore/>

Got an hour to kill? Watch (nearly) every version of Windows being installed (MS-DOS through Windows 8).  
<http://betanews.com/2013/06/04/got-an-hour-to-kill-watch-nearly-every-version-of-windows-being-installed/>

Move the mouse for an unending kaleidoscope.  
[http://darkpsychedelic.ru/FV\\_17.html](http://darkpsychedelic.ru/FV_17.html)

ANTS - Nature's Secret Power: special macro film technology displays the mysterious world of these social insects. One-hour video.  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z-gIx7LXcQM>

Pick the numbers from 1 to 100 in a timed challenge.  
<http://www.sporcle.com/games/RobPro/1-100-click-me>

Variety of images from scanning and transmission electron microscopes.  
<http://www.dartmouth.edu/~emlab/gallery/>

Simple, step-by-step pictorial instructions on how to do over 300 practical (and not-so-practical) activities.  
<http://www.showmenow.com>

Military aviation history and heritage of the Michigan Air National Guard at Selfridge ANG Base.  
<http://www.127wg.af.mil/resources/history&heritage.asp>

The Library of Congress displays 19600 historical photos.

[http://www.flickr.com/photos/library\\_of\\_congress/](http://www.flickr.com/photos/library_of_congress/)

Cartoons from the deranged folks who bring you Shoebox greeting cards. Search by category or author.  
<http://www.shooboxblog.com>

An illustrated travel guide to Great Britain based on personal experience of the locations, with pictures of landscapes, historical buildings, moorlands, villages, more.  
<http://www.beenthere-donethat.org.uk>

Collection of challenging logic puzzles and word games for enthusiasts of all ages.  
<http://www.puzzlersparadise.com>

The short-course on-line library of digital photography – tips and advice for buying and using digital cameras.  
<http://www.shortcourses.com>

Takes the mystery out of all things mechanical, so that women can fix, renew and restore their own stuff. Ask questions, read articles, watch videos.  
<http://seejanedrill.com>

Play the piano on your keyboard with this open-source MIDI keyboard application.  
<http://freepiano.tiwb.com>



## World Wide Web Column on the Club Web Site

Check out the WebPageReviews section on the club's web site. You can see past web sites reviewed in the column on our club web page. They are arranged into various topics to help locate a specific site.

