



# THE WYSIWYG



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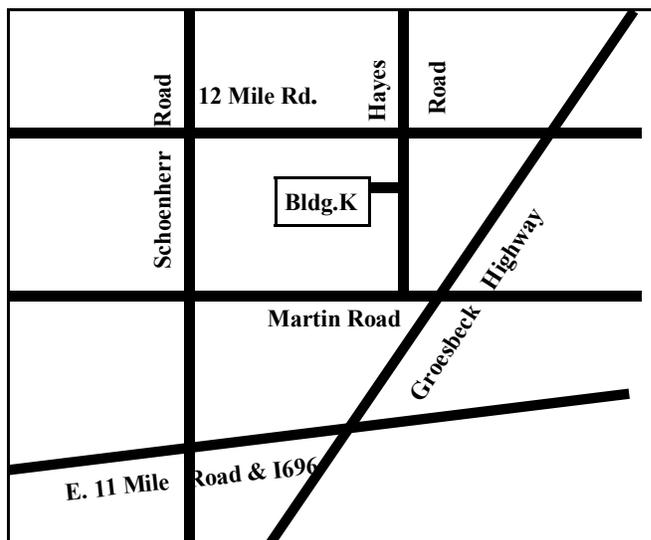
**STERLING HEIGHTS COMPUTER CLUB**

PO Box 385

Sterling Heights, MI 48311-0385

## MAIN MEETING: TUESDAY APR 7 7:30PM

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



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**This Month's Main Meeting Topic:**  
"Alternatives to the usual cable TV and cell phone choices" by Eric Hayes, IT Coordinator, Royal Oak Public Library

### PC SIG Meeting:

Tuesday, April 21  
6:30 at the  
Clinton-Macomb  
Public Library

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

### Clinton-Macomb Public Library

The Library (Main Branch) is located at 40900 Romeo Plank Road in Clinton Township, on the east side of Romeo Plank, south of 19 Mile and Cass Roads, at the intersection of Romeo Plank and Canal roads (south-east corner).  
(Tel. 586-226-5000.)



VISIT THE SHCC WEB PAGE:  
<http://www.SterlingHeightsComputerClub.org>

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 SIG. 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	Don VanSyckel
Greeter for visitors	Lindell Beck
Newsletter publisher	Rick Kucejko
Novice SIG	Paul Baecker
Program Coordinator	Mike Bader
Publicity	Patrick Little
Resource People	open
PC SIG	Jack Vander-Shrier
Welcome & check-in desk.	Jim Waldrop
Web Site	Don VanSyckel
Web Watch column	Paul Baecker

**Contact Information:**

Paul Baecker	586-286-2314	webwatch@sterlingheightscomputerclub.org
Mike Bader	586-447-6683	mbader@flash.net
Lindell Beck	586-939-4278	Ljb48312@gmail.com
Ron Frederick	586-294-5687	frederic@gdls.com
Jerry Hess	586-566-6166	jhess@comcast.net
Rick Kucejko	248-879-6180	rick@kucejko.com
Patrick Little	586-264-1497	pblittle@wideopenwest.com
Sharon Patrick	586-268-3626	espee37@att.net
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)

**2015 SHCC Officers**

President: Don VanSyckel  
 V. President: Mike Bader  
 Secretary: Rick Kucejko  
 Treasurer: Paul Baecker

**Four Month Meeting Schedule:**

**APRIL 2015**

- 1 - COMP meeting
- 7 - SHCC – "Alternatives to the usual cable TV and cell phone choices" by Eric Hayes, IT Coordinator, Royal Oak Public Library
- 12 - SEMCO meeting
- 21 - Novice SIG

**MAY 2015**

- 5 - SHCC – "Drones and Quadcopters" presented by Harry Arnold of the Detroit Drone User Group
- 6 - COMP meeting
- 3 - SEMCO meeting
- ? - Novice SIG

**JUNE 2015**

- 2 - SHCC – Main Meeting
- 3 - COMP meeting
- 7 - SEMCO meeting
- 23 - PC SIG

**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, MI (810) 982-1187  
 Web Page: http://www.bwcomp.org  
 Reciprocating: Yes

**South Eastern Michigan Computer Organization (SEMCO)**  
 Time: 2nd Sunday at 1:30PM  
 Place: Altair, 1820 E Big Beaver Road, Troy, MI 48083 (248) 840-2400  
 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 "Activities - Programs", then to "OPC 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



I can't win, well maybe I'm not supposed to. To me, my PC is not something to kill time on, it's a means to an end. That end, tonight, is to write this article. Other times it's to balance the check book, research a location for a weekend jaunt, track expenses, or a number of other activities. So in a way, I don't really care what version of windows I'm using as long as it does everything I need. A few months ago I was happily using WinXP. Microsoft decided to not support it any more. I looked around and Windows Vista and Windows 8 were both out. Windows 7 looked good so I upgraded to that.

Now before I've even fully warmed up to Windows 7, Windows 10 is on the horizon. This is why I say I can't win. I had planned to use Windows 7 for a few years before being forced, again, to upgrade. Now with two later versions of Windows available (almost) my change to Windows 7 is looking less like it will last years. I say possi-

bly I'm not supposed to win refers to Microsoft's obvious plan to pump money into the corporation by cranking out new versions of Windows whether they're needed or not.

I believe tools are better used or handled by an experienced hand. Whether it's the operating system, word processor, or data base, you can use the tool best when you know it and this comes with experience.

This month we welcome back Mr. Eric Hayes of the Royal Oak Library. He will be presenting "Alternatives to the usual cable TV and cell phone choices". This promises to be a very interesting meeting. Most of us are dealing with rising cable and phone bills while trying to get good reliable service. This is one meeting you don't want to miss.



## Presenters Wanted

The 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.



## Member Classified Ads

Send any classifieds to the WYSIWYG Publisher at the club's PO Box, or to his e-mail address posted on page 2 of the newsletter.

Ads are available to SHCC members and are limited to computer related items for non-commercial purposes. There is no charge for members classified ads.



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

## Last Month's Meeting

SHCC member Mike Bader presented "Potpourri of Favorites; Links, Sites, and Utilities" in March. The originally scheduled presenter bailed at the last minute and Mike stepped up to do the presentation. It was an interesting and informative meeting that had a little something for everyone.



## Door Prizes

Door prize drawings are held at regular club meetings. The winner's circle for March included:

**Tom Miller** won a power strip

**Ralph Osinski** won a video card

**Mike Galat** won a flashlight

**Martee Held** won a 32 GB flash drive

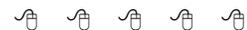
**Richard Katnik** won a Pro's tool kit

**Richard Monk** won a Netgear Router

**Paul Baecker** won a flashlight pack

**James Waldrop** won a router

**Mike Bader** won ear buds/phone



If your dues are paid the month they are due, as shown on the invoice the club sends, you automatically get an extra month of membership. This policy has been in effect for many years but newer members may not be aware of this "free month" policy.

## NFC Stickers And Tags - Useful Technology You May Have Never Heard Of

by Ira Wilsker

### WEBSITES:

<http://www.nfctags.com>  
<http://trendblog.net/creative-and-useful-ways-to-use-nfc-tags-with-your-smartphone>  
<http://www.tagstand.com>  
<http://nfctags.tagstand.com>  
<http://rapidnfc.com>  
<https://play.google.com/store/search?q=nfc%20writer&c=apps>  
<http://www.nfctags.com/nfc-usecases>  
<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/TecTile>  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Near\\_field\\_communication#Smartphone\\_automation\\_and\\_NFC\\_tags](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Near_field_communication#Smartphone_automation_and_NFC_tags)  
<http://electronics.howstuffworks.com/nfc-tag.htm>  
[http://kimtag.com/s/nfc\\_tags](http://kimtag.com/s/nfc_tags)  
<http://lifehacker.com/5943006/what-is-nfc-and-how-can-i-use-it>  
<http://youtu.be/zw22iFwDeDQ>  
<http://youtu.be/9xv4S7Afgfs>  
<http://youtu.be/fs8v16yzVOA>  
[http://www.ebay.com/sch/Cell-Phones-Accessories-/15032/i.html?\\_sop=15&\\_nkw=nfc+sticker](http://www.ebay.com/sch/Cell-Phones-Accessories-/15032/i.html?_sop=15&_nkw=nfc+sticker)

I was recently reading the manufacturer's blog for my wife's new OnePlus One smart phone, and was intrigued by a blog post for a technology that I had never previously been aware of, but instantly realized its great potential. This blog column was talking about using the OnePlus One to program and read "NFC Tags", also called "NFC Stickers." In the blog post and its responses, it appears that almost all smart phones and other intelligent devices with "NFC" can securely program and read data from tiny, inexpensive NFC stickers and tags.

Last year I wrote a column "Using Your Smart Phone as a Credit Card Substitute" where I explained how many of the newer smart phones included an evolving technology called "Near Field Communications", more commonly known by its acronym

"NFC". In that column, I explained how NFC may be revolutionizing the credit card industry, as NFC capable smart phones along with appropriate apps, could be utilized instead of a plastic credit card to complete financial transactions. The benefit of using a smart phone with NFC over plastic is that the seller is never in possession of credit or debit card information that can be illicitly hacked, but still receives prompt payment from the credit card company. NFC utilizes an ultra low power radio transceiver with a typical range of only about 10 cm or about 4 inches; by holding an enabled smart phone or similar device within 4 inches of a compatible point of sale device, and the user securely authorizing payment via a fingerprint, PIN, or other secure method, the payment is processed. The user has his existing credit cards connected to his smart phone via relevant apps, and any awards points or "cash back" bonuses still accrue as if a plastic card has been used.

While this explosive new technology is now being widely implemented in the retail, restaurant, and service industry as a secure method of payment, an entire new industry has appeared which utilizes NFC for purposes other than for processing payments. A quick search on the major search engines as well as eBay, Amazon, and even the websites of several of the local big box stores showed that these NFC stickers and tags are currently readily available, sometimes as inexpensive as only a few cents each. Often smaller than a postage stamp, these NFC tags can be blank in appearance, or purchased imprinted with sports teams logos, smart phone related icons, personal photos, product and company logos, patterns, or other desired facade.

Inside these stickers, which are also about as thin as a postage stamp, is a

tiny printed microcircuit that contains a tiny amount of programmable memory, and an NFC transceiver. Some of these stickers are designed for dry indoor use, but many are advertised as waterproof for outdoor use. No battery is included or necessary inside, as these stickers and tags are powered by the low powered radio waves transmitted by the NFC device that is communicating with the sticker. The more modern NFC tags grew out of a "TecTile" technology developed by Samsung in 2012 for some of its Galaxy S III smart phones.

Being a relatively new technology which is also very inexpensive to implement, industry and individuals are still finding practical and entertainment uses for these tags, only limited by minimal memory of the stickers themselves. According to Wikipedia, some of the earliest uses of the Samsung TecTiles was to change the setting of a smart phone to a quiet or an in-car Bluetooth setting; turn on the alarm clock app of the smart phone when the phone was placed in range of a sticker on a night stand; launch selected apps when the phone was close to a programmed sticker; automatically connect to a Wi-Fi network in a coffee shop or other commercial location; show promotional messages and coupons; automatically dial the phone or sent a preprogrammed text message; share vCard or business card contact information; open a web page; show current location on a mapping service such as Google maps; update Facebook location services; generate "likes" on Facebook; and follow a Twitter user. Each of these tasks can be instantly accomplished by simply moving an NFC enabled smart phone within 4 inches of one of these stickers.

The NFC tags may be quickly and easily programmed by the user from a smart phone app, and can be selectively locked to prevent alteration if desired; only the device that locked a tag can be used to unlock it, a strong security feature. Tags are reusable and can be reprogrammed unless

digitally locked, with some tags still fully functional after 100,000 programming and reprogramming cycles. In reality, the major risk to tags is of a physical nature, such as the glue on the back losing its adhesive properties allowing it to either be peeled off of the surface to which it is attached, or simply falling off on its own.

While individual users can readily program their own NFC tags and stickers, a significant industry is growing with commercially produced and programmed stickers, which are already showing up in business establishments or on individual products. Some early uses of these tags were on appliances where moving an NFC device would display the manufacturer's service website on the device. Some grocery companies have placed the stickers on supermarket shelves, with the image of the product printed on the small sticker, which will then create a digital coupon on the shopper's smart phone if placed in NFC range of the sticker. At some recent professional conferences, stickers strategically placed near the doors recorded the attendance of participants as they entered and exited meeting rooms; some schools and colleges are also experimenting with these NFC tags for automatically recording the attendance of students who wave their smart device near the edge of the door frame as they enter a classroom. Since individual stickers are so inexpensive, and can be programmed in bulk, they can easily be placed in multiple locations and also have multiple stickers at a single location, such as one every 12 inches on the sides of a door frame. Some colleges have started using NFC tags for course registration purposes, better enabling a student to create his schedule.

The website [nfc-tags.com](http://nfc-tags.com), which sells NFC tags, apps, and devices, shows a multitude of uses for its tags. In addition to generating digital coupons, NFC tags can also be used for other promotional purposes such as providing affinity membership benefits; automatically displaying a webpage

with recipes; enabling instant product customization such as monograms, initials, and images; and offering the consumer other promotional benefits. Games and toys can make use of NFC tags by introducing new features and functionalities, as well as location resources for activities as geocaching. In terms of location security, these stickers can be used to control access to restricted areas; track the location of employees and visitors to a facility; be used for rapid security checks; maintain accurate healthcare records; and exchange online schedules, all with the swipe of a smart device.

Business and other organizations can program the stickers to download (with the permission of the user) ringtones and apps, menus, instructions, warranty information, and other contemporary information. There are YouTube videos of smart phone users moving their NFC capable smart phones near a sticker on a restaurant table, which then shows any promotions, specials, and coupons which are displayed on the smart phone, and then opens an illustrated, interactive restaurant menu on the phone. The customer can place his food and drink order directly from his smart phone, as well as ordering drink refills, dessert, and other dishes as needed. After dinner, his phone displayed a detailed restaurant check where a tip can be calculated and entered, and then paid using NFC, charging the meal to his selected credit card. All of this technology already exists, and is very cost effective in terms of labor savings, customer satisfaction, the ability of the restaurant to "turn over" tables faster, negate the need for expensive printed menus that must be periodically reprinted to reflect price and offering changes, and even connect to ratings services such as Yelp or TripAdvisor where the customer can leave reviews of the restaurant and its food.

Already some novel uses of NFC tags are in use; for example, the city of San Francisco has attached NFC stickers to many of its parking meters

where consumers can both pay the parking meter ([en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Paybyphone.jpg](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Paybyphone.jpg)), record the location, and receive automated phone reminders of the time remaining on the meter. In the fashion industry, as advertised on eBay, women can purchase artificial fingernails for under \$2, with embedded NFC and tiny LEDs that light up when near an NFC phone ([i.ebayimg.com/00/s/M T A w M V g x M D A x / z / lyQAAOSwQJhU19ld/\\$\\_57.JPG](http://i.ebayimg.com/00/s/M T A w M V g x M D A x / z / lyQAAOSwQJhU19ld/$_57.JPG)). At least one manufacturer is producing waterproof NFC tags that sell for a little more than a dollar, and can be printed or engraved like a dog tag, and used on pet collars, medical emergency bracelets and necklaces, or other identity needs, and programmed with a web link that when scanned with a smart device would display relevant information. On a pet collar, these tags when scanned will display the owner's information; as a medical tag, can display emergency contact and health information; when worn by a "lost" child, the device can display contact information on the parents. These tags can also be attached to, or built into a key fob, and used to find the owner of lost keys. Similarly, these tags can be attached to a cell phone, and scanned by another device to locate the owner of the lost phone; the identical tags can also be attached to luggage, briefcases, laptops, and other frequently lost and found possessions, and then used to locate the rightful owner. At a unit cost often measured in pennies, these NFC tags and stickers can easily be worth more than their weight in gold when used to recover lost items.

With packages of these stickers containing multiple stickers selling for as little as a dollar, and bulk packages of NFC tags dropping the price down to less than a quarter each, it may be an inexpensive exercise to purchase some of the NFC devices and experiment with them. On the Google Play Store are dozens of NFC writers that can program the tags ([play.google.com/store/search?q=NFC%20writers](http://play.google.com/store/search?q=NFC%20writers)), many of the apps being free. Similar

apps are available for Apple iOS devices. While many of the stickers and apps will work with all contemporary NFC enabled smart devices, some of the stickers are recommended only for specific model smart phones, as there are several different NFC chipsets in use by different cell phone makers, and not all of them comply with the industry de facto standards. Still, it may be fun to experiment with the stickers. Watch for our local establishments to more widely attach these stickers to products and shelves. Some tables and nightstands in motel and hotel rooms are getting NFC stickers to securely enable authorized Wi-Fi service, display room service menus, and other hotel information. If you see a restaurant using these NFC stickers, try the digital menu and re-

lated services. Of course, you can use it as originally envisioned, as a secure method of payment for goods and services.

It is inevitable that these NFC tags and stickers will be appearing in more widespread locations. If your smart phone or device already has the NFC feature, try using it; you might find it to be fun, as well as a very useful function. If in the market for a new smart phone, strongly consider those that have the NFC feature. Even if you are not using NFC now, you may want to in the future.

*This article was reprinted with permission of the author, Ira Wilsker.*



## The Tip Corner

by Bill Sheff, Lehigh Valley Computer Group, Pennsylvania  
www.lvcg.org nsheff@aol.com

### File Extensions

We all know that file extensions tell us what program can be used to open up a specific type of file. In Windows Explorer some of you might notice that files are listed without the file extension. This is usually the default. However in today's world it might be a good idea to see what the file extension is which could help in determining whether or not some files might be malicious. The easiest way to show file extensions on all files is to go to Control Panel>Folder Options and click on View at the top of the window that opened. Scroll down to where you see "Hide Extensions for known file types" and unclick the box to the left. This will now show all file extensions. While there you might want to investigate the many other options available such as showing all hidden system files that are usually hidden from view. Just clear the Hide protected operating system files check box, and then click OK.

### Customize Your Folders

You can customize your folders to go from a plain folder icon to something

that can represent what is inside the folder. It used to be easier, but now you have to go to Computers and click on the C: drive, then go to users and then documents. Right click on any folder and click Options and then click on Customize. A new pane opens up with lots of icons. Select the one you want, click Apply and then OK. The icon will now replace the old basic vanilla folder icon. If you don't like the icon go back and click "restore original icon." You can also select "choose a file to show as the icon."

Check the box next to "Choose A Background Picture" and click NEXT. From here you can choose from many different backgrounds, or pick one that you have stashed on your computer somewhere. You can also change the color of the text.

### Display

If you click on Display in the Control Panel you can change the look of your computer; altering colors, fonts, backgrounds, screen savers, etc. And if you want to check what's going on

inside of a file or program just click "Properties." You can do this by right clicking a file and select Properties from the menu, or you can hold down your ALT key and doubling clicking the file.

### What Does the Print Screen button do?

If you hold down Ctrl + Print Scrn keys you capture your entire screen. To capture a copy of only the open window, hold down the Alt + Print Scrn keys. Although you do not see anything happen, the picture is now on your Windows Clipboard, and you can paste it into any program that will allow you to view a picture. There are also a lot of free screen capture programs. I use Gadwin Print Screen 4.7. It allows you to drag a diagonal on the screen so you can copy just what you want. But another one is ScreenHunter 5 and it is also free. They both take the pain out of grabbing screen captures and makes it easy to determine the area of the screen you want to capture. You can then save to BMP or JPG format. Hotkeys are also available.

### Another Way to View the Contents of the C: drive

On your keyboard, hit WINDOWS KEY + R. No Windows key? Get a new computer – Joke. Just click on Start and in the text area type a backslash, ( \ ), and hit enter.

### Searching Files

You know that the FIND utility allows you to search for files on your computer. But you can also search the inside of your files to search for text.

This option was hidden in Windows 95 but is visible in Windows 98 and above. Just click on Find>Files or Folders. In the text area labeled "Containing Text" type the text you're looking for.

### Taskbar and START Menu

Right click on your taskbar and choose PROPERTIES. You can adjust many items on the Taskbar or Start menus or Toolbars. Changing the size

of icons and many other options are available.

### Restart Your System Without Rebooting

To restart Windows without restarting your whole system, hold down your left SHIFT key and keep it pressed throughout this process.

Click START | SHUT DOWN. Choose "Restart." Click "OK." You may now release the SHIFT key.

### Registry Defrag 2.35

By this time most of us have been using CCleaner to clean up our computer and registry. But I don't know if CCleaner also closes up the gaps in the registry caused by scattered data. That's where Free Registry Defrag comes in. It compacts and optimizes your Registry (though it doesn't remove invalid entries), and it even runs on Windows Vista.

### Quick Startup 2.3

Lots of applications take the opportunity to load themselves when you start your PC, whether you want them to or are even aware of them. Quick Startup shows you all those programs that start at startup and allows you to disable the ones you don't really need to launch at startup.

### Revo Uninstaller 1.5

After using Quick Startup 2.3, you may find apps on your system that you no longer need (or never wanted in the first place). Revo Uninstaller goes beyond what Windows does with its Add/Remove Programs function, cleaning up any remnants of a removed app (like Registry entries) that Windows might otherwise miss. It also gathers files related to broken applications so you can clean them off your system.

### What Is Under the Hood

Two programs that can help you see what your computer is all about are Belarc Advisor 7.2 and CPU-Z 1.43. Belarc Advisor offers PC users the convenience of a full-system scan and a handy hardware and software diag-

nostic report. It identifies the components in your PC—CPU, motherboard, RAM, hard drives, etc.—and detects weaknesses in your system's security. Advisor can also tell if you have Windows vulnerabilities that require running a patch, whether your antivirus software is up to date, and which Microsoft hotfixes your system is missing. It will then create an HTML file of its report so you can easily view it in your Web browser.

CPU-Z can also tell you everything about your PC's core components, from basic specs like processor name and RAM amount to overclocking essentials such as clock multiplier and voltage settings. If you want to find out what's going on under the hood of your machine, CPU-Z can do it. Some people also call it a tweaker's god-send.

### Recover Files 2

At some of our meetings we mentioned that there are various programs that will recover files even if the drive has been reformatted. Well, this is not it. But if you have ever deleted a file

from the Recycle Bin, Windows Explorer or even a thumb drive by accident, here is a free utility that will get it back for you. The caveat is that you can not have rewritten over any part of the file. So when it happens recover right away before you start filing stuff.

### DoubleKiller 1.6.2

There are many programs that search out and list duplicate files. Over time it seems that duplicates just crop into the computer. They are invisible but there. The Windows search function doesn't really work well, so give DoubleKiller 1.6.2 a try. As its name suggests, the utility quickly finds doubles in your file library so you can decide whether to delete the copy or not. DoubleKiller also lets you search by file type, which makes it easy if you just want to clean up your MP3 collection.

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

☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺

## What's New In Avast Antivirus 2015?

by Bob Rankin

**A**vast 2015 contains some features never before seen in Avast. Read on for the full story, and learn how you can get the paid version for free...

First off, there's a home network scanner in Avast 2015 that I have not seen in any other security suite. When launched, the network scanner checks your router's administrator username and password, warning you to change them if they're still set at factory defaults.

It warns of unencrypted Wi-Fi connections, or those encrypted with the easily hacked WEP protocol. It checks to make sure your DNS has not been redirected and that your router is not accessible from the Internet. If there is a problem, Avast 2015 will display

step-by-step instructions for solving it – if your router model is one that Avast supports. Otherwise, you'll have to consult the user manual or Google it.

These are "front door" security precautions that many users miss, so I applaud Avast for these additions to the already comprehensive protection that this free security suite provides.

### Avast 2015 Review

With the 2015 edition, Avast seems to be morphing into an all-in-one system maintenance and security suite, much like Advanced System Care, PC Matic and other utility suites. Avast's emphasis is on maintenance issues that affect security, but they may also improve system performance.

Avast's "Browser Cleanup" feature is not what its name implies to most people. Instead of clearing the browser's file cache, browsing history, etc., Avast cleans up unwanted toolbars and plugins, eliminating points of vulnerability to hackers and places where malware likes to hide.

Keeping all of one's software up-to-date is another security issue. Avast 2015's "Software Updater" makes it a breeze. You can set it to notify you when updates are available or just install them automatically. This module checks for updates of operating system, browser, and popular applications, but if you don't see some of your apps in the tool's list you'll have to update them on your own.

#### Free or Paid Version?

"Avast Free Antivirus" is the name of the free version of the Avast suite. "Avast Internet Security" is a paid version that offers extra features such as Anti-Hijack Protection (to secure your online banking and other sensitive accounts), a Silent Firewall (to shield you from hackers) and an Anti-Spam module. The cost is \$39/year, but there's a way to earn a free copy.

Want to get a free copy of Avast 2015? You can, with Bob's Avast Friend Referral Link. <http://www.avast.com/en-us/get/6Y7QxHvD>

You can even get the PAID VERSION FOR FREE by earning Avast Karma Points with your own referral link. What's this all about? Full details are at the end of this article.

Avast Free 2015 also includes demo versions of premium security tools. The SecureLine VPN option is a free three-day trial of a fully encrypted proxy service; using it hides your IP address and Web surfing activity even from your own ISP. A one-year subscription costs \$60. "GrimeFighter" analyzes your system for junk files, bad registry entries, and other junk that can slow your system; but to fix the problems you'll need to pay \$20.

(Or you can use Privazer, the free cleaner-upper I recommend.) The free Mobile Backup trialware comes with a 2 GB Dropbox account and stores your mobile device's data in the cloud; the premium version costs \$15.

The main Avast interface screen includes a "Store" button that reveals a host of premium and freemium products, an indication that competition in the Internet Security marketplace is heating up, or that profit margins which rely on converting free users to paid customers are getting tighter.

I've been using Avast for over a year since switching from AVG, and I'm giving the new Avast 2015 version a big thumbs up for some innovative new features and continued comprehensive protection from malware threats.

#### Karma Points and Free Avast Software

If you have registered as a member of the Avast online community you will see in the upper-right corner of Avast Free's main screen your registered email address and a notation such as, "540 karma." So-called "karma points" are awarded for various acts of participation in the community, and

even for being a user of Avast Free for a long time. Referring friends, posting to forums, trying a demo feature, buying a premium feature, etc., all earn you more karma points and "status" in the community.

With enough Karma points, you can earn a free copy of Avast Internet Security. Here's the fastest way to do that. On the Avast main screen, click the ACCOUNT tab. Login to your Avast account (or create one if needed). Next, click on the colored circle under the Logout link at the top right. On the next screen, you'll see a gray box that says "Recommend Avast and earn Karma". Click that link, and you'll be given your own referral link, which you can use to invite friends via Email, Facebook, Twitter or Google+. Recommending Avast to 7 friends can earn you a free year of Avast Internet Security (14 friends, two years; 21 friends, three years). Your friends must download and install Avast via your referral link.

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



## Tips To Extend Your iPhone/iPad Battery Life

By Bill Crowe, Sarasota TUG, FL

[www.thestug.org](http://www.thestug.org) [presentations@thestug.org](mailto:presentations@thestug.org)

Anyone who's used an iPhone for even a few days has discovered that while these phones are more powerful, and more fun, than perhaps any other cell or smart phone, that fun comes with a price: battery use. Any halfway intensive iPhone user will recharge their phone almost every couple of days.

There are ways to conserve iPhone battery life, but many of them involve turning off services and features, which makes it a choice between all the cool things that the iPhone can do and having enough juice to do them.

Here are some tips to help you extend your iPhone's power, including new tips for iOS 7, which has features that can drain battery faster than earlier versions.

You don't need to follow all of them (what fun would that be?) - just use the ones that make sense for how you use your iPhone - but following some will help you conserve juice.

### 1. Turn on Auto-Brightness

The iPhone has an ambient light sensor that adjusts the brightness of the screen based on the light around it

(darker in dark places, brighter when there's more ambient light) to both save battery and make it easier to see. Turn **Auto-Brightness** on and you'll save energy because your screen will need to use less power in dark places.

**Find it in the Settings app -> Brightness & Wallpaper -> Auto-Brightness On**

## 2. Reduce Screen Brightness

You can control the default brightness of your iPhone screen with this slider. Needless to say, the brighter the default setting for the screen, the more power it requires. Keep the screen dimmer to conserve more of your battery.

**Find it in Settings -> Brightness & Wallpaper**

## 3. Stop Motion (iOS 7)

One of the coolest features of iOS 7 is called Background Motion. It's subtle, but if you move your iPhone and watch the app icons and background image, you'll see them move slightly independently of each other, as if they're on different planes. This is called a parallax effect. It's really cool, but it also drains battery. You may want to leave it on to enjoy the effect, but if not, turn it off this way:

**Settings -> General -> Accessibility -> Reduce Motion -> move slider to green/on**

## 4. Disable Dynamic Backgrounds (iOS 7)

Another neat feature introduced in iOS 7 is animated wallpapers that move underneath your app icons. These dynamic backgrounds offer a cool interface flourish, but they also use more power than a simple static background image. Dynamic Backgrounds aren't a feature you have to turn on or off, just don't select the Dynamic Backgrounds in the **Wallpapers & Backgrounds** menu.

## 5. Turn Bluetooth Off

Bluetooth wireless networking is especially useful for cell phone users with wireless headsets or earpieces. But transmitting data wirelessly takes

battery and leaving Bluetooth on to accept incoming data at all times requires even more juice. Turn off **Bluetooth** except when you're using it to squeeze more power from your battery.

**Find it in Settings -> Bluetooth -> Move Slider to Off**

## 6. Turn Off 3G/4G

The iPhone 3G and later models can take advantage the speedy 3G and 4G LTE cellular phone networks. Not surprisingly, using 3G, and especially 4G LTE, requires more energy to get the quicker data speeds and higher-quality calls. It's tough to go slower, but if you need more power, **turn off 3G/4G or LTE** and just use the older, slower networks. Your battery will last longer (though you'll need it when you're downloading websites more slowly!).

**Find it in Settings -> General -> Cellular -> Slide Enable 3G to Off on some models or Enable LTE to Off on the iPhone 5 or newer**

## 7. Keep Wi-Fi Off

The other kind of high-speed network that the iPhone can connect to is Wi-Fi. Wi-Fi is even faster than 3G or 4G, though it's only available where there's a hotspot (not virtually everywhere like 3G or 4G). Keeping Wi-Fi turned on at all times in hopes that an open hotspot will appear is a sure way to drain your battery life. So, unless you're using it right this second, **keep Wi-Fi turned off.**

**Find it in Settings -> WiFi -> Slide to Off**

## 8. Turn Off Location Services

One of the coolest features of the iPhone is its built-in GPS. This allows your phone to know where you are and give you exact driving directions, give that information to apps that help you find restaurants, and more. But, like any service that sends data over a network, it needs battery power to work. If you're not using **Location Services**, and don't plan to right away, turn them off and save some power.

**Find it in Settings -> Privacy -> Location Services -> Slide to Off**

## 9. Turn Off Other Location Settings (iOS 5 and up)

Use this tip if your iPhone or other devices upgraded to iOS 5 are burning through battery life too quickly. It's probably a software bug, so Apple may fix it and this tip may go away, but in the meantime, here it is.

A number of additional location services introduced in iOS 5 seem to be draining too quickly. Turn them off and you should regain some battery life.

**Find it in Settings -> Privacy -> Location Services -> System Services -> Turn off Diagnostics & Usage, Location-Based iAds, and Setting Time Zone**

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

## SHCC Emergency Cancellation

**S**terling Heights Computer Club meets at Macomb Community College (MCC). We will meet if MCC is open and will not if MCC is closed. MCC closure is announced with other school closings on many local TV and radio stations. 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. 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 address you have listed with SHCC current.



## 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.

Virtual tour of the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History. Follow arrows on the floor. Zoom in and out of some exhibits (using mouse wheel or arrow keys), download pre-set photos of others (look for camera icon).  
<http://www.mnh.si.edu/vtp/1-desktop/>

Ubuntu weekly newsletter. Read current issue or browse the archives for previous issues. Or subscribe. Select "Print View" to print issues to paper or file.  
<https://wiki.ubuntu.com/UbuntuWeeklyNewsletter/>

Various image-editing products treat pics in different ways. What's the difference between *vector* and *bitmap* images?  
<http://www.guidingtech.com/38355/difference-vector-bitmap/>

Microsoft warns to remove gadgets in Windows Vista or Windows 7 or risk attack.  
[http://www.pcworld.com/article/259085/micro-soft\\_urges\\_users\\_to\\_shut\\_down\\_windows\\_gadgets\\_or\\_risk\\_attack.html](http://www.pcworld.com/article/259085/micro-soft_urges_users_to_shut_down_windows_gadgets_or_risk_attack.html)  
<https://technet.microsoft.com/library/security/2719662>

Anyone can look up the **default ID and password** for your *home router*, which is why you should change them when you set yours up to avoid a hacker's attempt to do so.  
<http://www.routerpasswords.com>

Just one of several sites with thousands of objective third-party product reviews in a vast range of categories — from antivirus software to robot vacuum cleaners to credit-card processing services.  
<http://www.toptenreviews.com>

How to emulate Android and run Android apps on your PC.  
<http://www.makeuseof.com/tag/how-to-emulate-android-run-android-apps-pc/>

Easy to use diagnostic tool that helps troubleshoot a wide range of system issues: presence of suspicious and unsigned

files, an unpatched operating system, outdated or malfunctioning drivers, suspicious network connections, more.  
<http://www.eset.com/int/support/sysinspector/>

How to emulate Android and run Android apps on your PC.  
<http://www.makeuseof.com/tag/how-to-emulate-android-run-android-apps-pc/>

Draw geometric shapes using various gear pairs. Toggle the gears on/off to see results. Save your masterpieces, view samples of others.  
<http://nathanfriend.io/inspirograph/>

Short tutorial in creating a website using WordPress.  
<http://websitesetup.org>

Some LibreOffice tutorial videos.  
<http://www.ilearnthings.com/blog/archives/>  
Some of the world's greatest cities - attractions, maps, facts, and loads of photos.  
<http://www.aviewoncities.com>

'Uncomplicating the Complicated' -- site provides tutorials, news and reviews about computer hardware in very easy-to-follow language.  
<http://www.hardwaresecrets.com>

A daily free Android app which you'd have to purchase otherwise.  
<http://android.giveawayoftheday.com>

Some LibreOffice tutorial videos.  
<http://www.ilearnthings.com/blog/archives/>

Infographic on websites which are spying on your Internet activity, with suggestions for improving your security.  
<http://www.makeuseof.com/tag/favorite-website-spying/>

**NOTE: Many of the links in the digital newsletter connect to the Internet if clicked. For those that do not, copy the link into your browser, and reach the web site that way.**

## 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 this column on our club web page. They are arranged into various key word categories to help locate a specific site.

