MC³ Newsletter

March 2020

The March meeting of the McHenry County Computer Club will be **March 14, 2020 at Salvation Army Building 290 W. Crystal Lake Ave., in Crystal Lake, IL.**

NOTE: *Enter the building on the parking lot level under the awning.*

Meeting Agenda

- Introductions & Reports
- Password Security; with and without a Password Manager - Ken Schuring

Upcoming Demos - Subject to Change

To be determined.

Please let a board member know if you have any ideas for upcoming demos.

Q & A

Q: Any thoughts on purchase of 'Win10 pro license'? Seeing licenses going from $8.95 to $199...

A: A quick glance at a reputable seller(NewEgg). Shows something at $9.99. This was a installation recovery disc ONLY. No License key. Their price for retail Win10 pro license was $199.99, which is for 32 or 64 bit download only.

A quick glance at ebay shows licenses for sale from overseas vendors. I would be VERY careful with that. First the price shown may NOT be in dollars. The first one I looked at was in GBP(Great British Pounds).

So **READ** the fine print for what is being sold.

With all that said, the official free upgrade from Win7 or 8.x is still alive and available from Microsoft.

Our membership is $26.00 a year.

NOTE: This fee offsets the running of the club; membership benefits include help with computer problems. Please pay Lyle Giese, our treasurer, or the designated Board Member in his absence.

MC³ OFFICIALS

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Is "Refurbished" Worth the Price? - Sterling Heights Computer Club

I recently went shopping for a cable modem to eliminate the rental cost of the one supplied by my ISP. After doing some online research, I decided on a capable Arris model and found it at a local retailer. The store had some new ones but also had some refurbished ones for about half the price of the new ones.

I thought to myself, well, they've simply been returned by shoppers who had changed their minds because they didn't like the color or style, and the units were probably basically unused. I inquired and learned that they had previously been used in a business somewhere (how would the salesman know?). So next I thought, well, do I want to save a few bucks by buying this so-called refurbished unit? Surely the items would have been repaired (if necessary) and tested by an OEM (Original Equipment Manufacturer) facility so that they operated as though they were new, even if they did have some wear marks on them. A no brainer to save the money, right?

But for whatever reason, I got a bit more inquisitive and asked about to what extent these items were refurbished. To the original manufacturer's specifications? In this case, nope. Well, then, surely the store could vouch for the level of refurbishment done by the third party. Nope again. I learned that there are businesses that exist to refurbish electronic products to their own specifications, and they are not necessarily noted as to their relationship to the product's original specs. My excitement in getting a great deal was gradually waning. Finally, the store rep tells me that they offer a 14-day return on a purchase of this item, but no warranty beyond that return option. I eventually passed on this offer. I figured that with my luck, the item would last past those 14 days, but die too soon there-after.

I also checked the details on the web site of a popular online retailer of computers and accessories. I found similar statements about refurbished products being refurbished to the specs of the refurbish-ing organization. Some refurbished items came with warranties, some could be warranted at extra cost, and some items were 'as is' (such as demos) with no right to complain after the purchase.

So, what this adventure taught me is to carefully vet the retailer of any refurbished item you're con-sidering (whether electronics, furniture, appliances, etc.) and carefully study the purchase agreement and any (often hidden) disclaimers that apply to the purchase.

A definition I found online for the term "refurbish" is "to brighten or freshen up,"

Yikes!!!

Making Windows 10 Look and Act Like Windows 7 - Gigabyte Gazette

Microsoft has ended support for Windows 7 on Tuesday, January 14th. After that date, there will be no further updates, bug fixes or security patches for Windows 7. The short-term consequences of the end of support are minimal: Windows 7 and installed applications will continue to work. Over time, however, as hackers discover new security flaws to exploit, Windows 7 will become less se-cure. So, it's time to think about moving to Windows 10, which has a more secure core design and still has support.
Another concern for Windows 7 users is that it's no longer available. If your current Windows 7 PC's hardware finally gives up the ghost and can't be repaired at a reasonable cost, your only option will be to buy a new Windows 10 PC via the retail market.
Coming from Windows 7, you may Initially find Windows 10's user interface unappealing or difficult

to navigate – especially the Settings interface. Our article this month will offer some ways to set up Windows 10 so that it looks and acts much like Windows 7. This can help with easing the transition to using the native Windows 10 user interface. For small businesses, this could afford a big saving on retraining staff accustomed to using Windows 7. We'll also talk about some ways to get applications written for Windows 7 to run on Windows 10. This can be critical if the support for that application has gone away – a not uncommon occurrence with "free" programs downloaded over the years.

Helpful Articles
Here are some links to helpful articles I found while researching for this month's article. I'll be highlighting a few of the items these articles offered.
https://www.howtogeek.com/277448/how-to-make-windows-10-look-and-act-more-like-windows-7/
https://www.theguardian.com/technology/askjack/2019/jun/06/how-can-i-make-windows-10-look-more-like-windows-7
https://www.windowscentral.com/top-10-ways-make-windows-10-more-windows-7
https://www.digitaltrends.com/computing/how-to-make-windows-10-look-like-windows-7/

Classic Shell
One of the biggest differences between Windows 7 and Windows 10 is the Windows Start menu. Classic Shell is a free program that you can download and install to give you a variety of Start Menu styles, including that of Windows 7. You can find the download link at http://www.classicshell.net/ The original author has placed the program in the public domain on GitHub.com, but you can still download his final version from the above site.

Classic Shell was originally built when Windows 8 was released; Windows 8 had NO Start Menu. It is compatible with Windows 8, 8.1 and 10. The articles above also offer a link where you can get an image file of the Windows 7 Start orb to be used with Classic Shell.

File Explorer
The Windows 10 File Explorer features the tabbed "ribbon" interface, which differs from Windows 7's Windows Explorer, which featured a "menus and toolbar" interface. I didn't find File Explorer that different and like the way it presents the user interface in the ribbon. But, for a closer recreation of Windows Explorer, the "Classic Shell" setup includes "Classic Explorer", which allows you to get a highly customized File Explorer, including making it look and act like the Windows Explorer.

Task Bar
The Windows 10 Task Bar includes the Search box, the "Talk to Cortana" icon and the "Task View" icon. These are not present in Windows 7. To remove them, right-click on an open spot on the Task Bar to display a pop-up menu.

Uncheck the "Show Cortana button" and "Show Task View button" to remove those from the Task Bar.

If you hover over the Search item, a submenu slides out with toggle options to "Show search box", "Show a search icon" or completely Hide the search.

You can also click "Taskbar Settings" to go to an extensive page of other Task Bar settings.

Title Bar Colors

In Windows 10's default color scheme, window title bars are colored white, making it difficult to see which Window has the focus to the mouse and keyboard. To add some color to title bars and other UI elements, you can go to Start > Settings > Personalization > Colors.

This will display a page of color settings. This screenshot shows the key parts for changing the color of various window and screen elements.

Uncheck (if checked) the "Automatically pick an accent color from my background" checkbox.

Select a pleasing accent color from the palette or click the + for a custom color. Check or uncheck the boxes for where the accent color should be used.
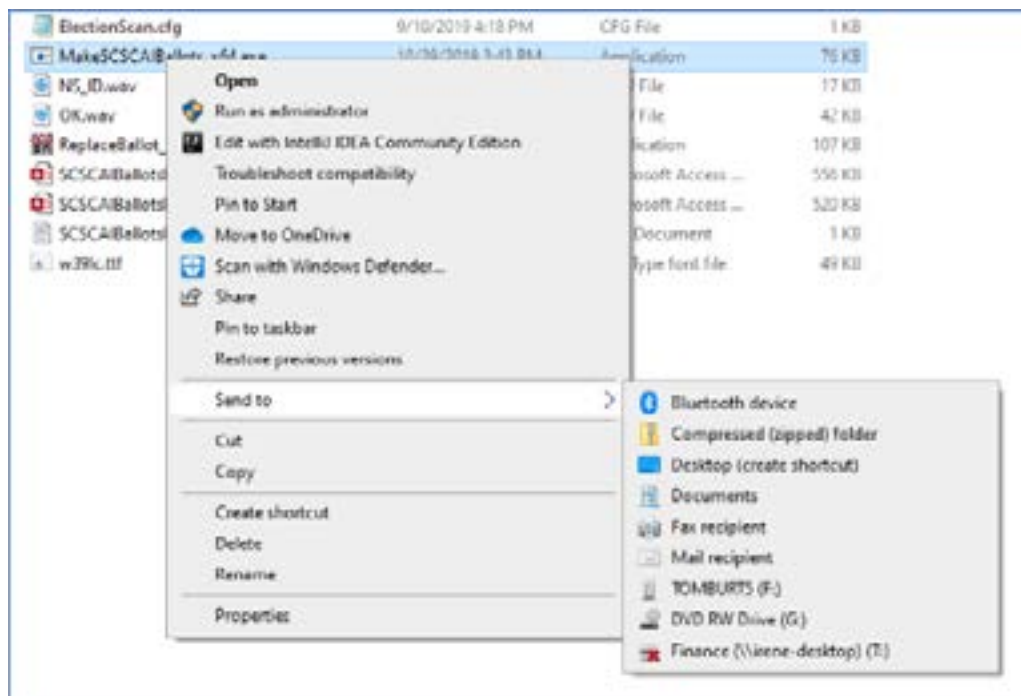
This tip can be handy even if you don't use any of the others.

Program Compatibility
A separate concern from making Windows 10 look like Windows 7 is getting older programs that ran on your Windows 7 system to run on Windows 10. This can be a challenge for programs whose authors are no longer in business. Windows 10 provides options to run a program in "compatibility" mode and/or Administrator mode.
The best way to do this is to start by creating a desktop shortcut to the program. In File Explorer, browse to the program's .exe file, right-click and, in the popup menu that appears, hover over "Send to" and then, in the secondary menu that appears, click "Desktop (create shortcut)". See the following screenshot. Rename the desktop shortcut to something meaningful to you.

Next, right-click the shortcut and choose Properties from the popup menu. In the Properties dialog, click the Compatibility tab. Check the box for "Run this program in compatibility mode for:"
In the dropdown, choose "Windows7".
You can also click the Shortcut tab and then click the Advanced button. A small dialog will display with a checkbox for "Run as administrator". Try checking this box if the program still doesn't run properly with Windows 7 compatibility selected.

When done with setting Properties, click OK. Then double click the shortcut to run the program. Hopefully, it will launch and run normally.
Some Windows 7 utility programs, especially those with accompanying drivers, may not run, even with compatibility mode.

Creating a Windows 7 Virtual Machine

If a program still fails to run on Windows 10 after you've tried Windows 7 compatibility and Run as administrator, you may want to try setting up a Windows 7 virtual machine. This requires a fair bit of technical skill, so I recommend visiting the SCSCC Tuesday Repair Lab team for help. Also, check out my "Virtual Machine Primer" seminar handout at https://www.scscc.club/smnr/Virtual_Machine_ Primer.pdf
The most universal virtual machine utility is the free Oracle Virtual Box, which runs on Windows 10 Home or Pro, macOS and Linux. You can download Virtual Box at https://www.virtualbox.org/
A virtual machine is a software/hardware emulation of a PC (the Guest) that runs as an application on a real PC (the Host). The Guest operating system and its applications run in the virtual machine and are unaware that they are running in a virtual environment. The virtual machine can be "booted" when needed and "shut down" when not needed. The virtual machine has a virtual hard drive, which is a single large file on the Host PC.

The general approach is to capture a snapshot of your Windows 7 PC's C: drive and system partitions and use that snapshot to create the virtual hard drive file.

Windows 7 Running in a Virtual Box Virtual Machine on Windows 10
That virtual hard drive file is attached as the boot drive of a virtual machine configured to emulate a Windows 7 PC. Once this is done, you can "boot" the virtual machine and it will virtually start Windows 7 from the attached virtual C: drive. Your virtual machine will then be running your former Windows 7 PC and its applications.
The easiest way to make a snapshot of your Windows 7 PC's C: drive and system partitions is to create a backup image using Macrium Reflect or Acronis True Image. That image can then be restored to the empty virtual C: drive of the Windows 7 virtual machine. Once the restore is done, the virtual machine will be able to boot up and the same Windows 7 and applications that you had on the original PC

Interesting Internet Finds - Steve Costello, SEFCUG

How To Clear Browser Cache In All Web Browsers
https://www.fossmint.com/clear-your-browser-cache/
There are times when the browser cache needs to be cleared. This post gives clear instructions on how to do it in Google Chrome, Firefox, Internet Explorer, Edge, Safari, and Opera.

Exercises For Computer Users And Office Workers – Nerd Fitness
https://www.thewindowsclub.com/exercises-for-computer-users
As a computer user, I sometimes forget to get enough exercise. If the same is true for you, check out this post for some quick and easy suggestions to keep fitter.

Do You Need A 4K HDMI Cable?
https://www.techhive.com/article/3330376/do-i-need-a-4k-hdmi-cable.html
Just get a 4K TV for the holidays? Check out this post before going out to spend lots of money on a special 4K HDMI cable.

5 Ways to Get In-Car Wi-Fi for Internet Access on the Go
https://www.makeuseof.com/tag/internet-car-wifi/
Some cars come with in-car wi-fi. If yours doesn't and you want everyone able to access to the internet, check out this post for some ideas.

How To Encrypt A Flash Drive Without Bitlocker
https://www.techtricksworld.com/how-to-encrypt-a-flash-drive-without-bitlocker/
If you want to encrypt a flash drive and don't have a version of Windows that includes Bitlocker, check out this post for some alternative methods.

USB Flash Drive vs. External HDD And SSD: Which Is Best For You?
https://www.maketecheasier.com/usb-flash-drive-vs-hdd-vs-ssd/
Are you confused about which of these you should be using? If so, check out this post that explains the advantages and disadvantages of each.

How To Secure Windows 7 After End Of Support
https://www.thewindowsclub.com/secure-windows-7-after-end-of-support
I know there are a lot of you that will continue to use Windows 7 after the end of support. If you are one of them, like me, check out this post to keep secure.