



# THE COMPUTER CONNECTION

## SAUK COMPUTER USER GROUP

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***The Whiteside County Senior Center cancelled the March meeting. Since then most everything has been shutdown due to the Coronavirus. Hope you aren't going crazy with cabin fever, but staying safe. Doubt if anything will change before our next meeting date. So will do my best to fill this newsletter with interesting articles that have nothing to do with the virus, except the joke sent by Joe Il.***

*Joe Fornero*

want to it. You should do this monthly anyway.

2. USE WINDOWS EXPLORER and go through ALL your folders and look at all your files. You need only look into the folders you save files in – such as Documents, Downloads, Music, Pictures, and Videos. You can SORT the list of files in a folder by DATE, so you can look for those old files easily and delete them. You can delete multiple files at one time by left-clicking the first file you want to delete, then holding down the “Ctrl” (control) key while you click on other files. When you let up on the Ctrl key you will have selected multiple files. Or you can hold down the “Shift” key when left-clicking on the second file and all files in-between will be highlighted.

3. DO NOT DELETE A FOLDER without looking inside it and seeing everything in it. Deleting a folder will delete all files and other folders in it. Look before you delete.

4. DELETING FILES AND FOLDERS FROM YOUR C-DRIVE will put them in your Recycle Bin, so you need to delete them from there too. If you delete files from an auxiliary drive (such as a USB “thumb” drive) they will NOT go to your Recycle Bin.

5. PHOTOS – Go through all your photo files, every photo, and delete the ones you do not want. Each photo is a file. Get a small portable drive and put all your photos on it and then delete them from your C-drive. Copy them to another device for backup. Or, use “Google Photos” and put them all there – it’s free and really nice.

6. BANKING – Review ALL your charge or debit cards and cancel those you no longer need or want. Review ALL AUTO-payments. Are you still auto-paying for a service you do not use? Lots of people do

not stop their auto-payments when they need to.

7. CONTACT LIST – Review ALL contacts on your contact list. Do you have more than one contact list? Delete all those old contacts you no longer need. Cut the cord.

8. APPS and programs – delete those apps you no longer use.

9. OLD CDs? – Do you still have any old CDs? Copy them to a portable drive and throw them away. Yes, you can copy music and other files too.

10. REORGANIZE – Now that you have deleted a lot of files, review the folders you have remaining and reorganize what you are keeping. Delete old folders you no longer want and create new and more meaningful folder names and move the files into them. You can change file and folder names using Windows Explorer.

11. BOOKMARKS – Review your bookmarks (web page shortcuts) and “tabs” on your web browsers and delete the ones you no longer use.

12. EMAIL – Review all your saved email folders and delete the ones you no longer need. How many emails are in your Inbox? More than 50? You can set your email option to automatically delete old emails for you. Maybe this is a bit much to do in one session, so just pick one at a time. And give yourself a nice reward for doing it! Your computer will thank you and you will be thankful yourself the next time you think “Where did I put that file?!”

### Cleanup for the NEW YEAR 2020 By Jim Cerney

It's time to give your Windows computer a good look and clean out all the junk! I bet most people clean out their garage more often than their computer. Sure you can run apps that delete stuff and you should do that regularly. But to start the New Year I am talking about going over ALL your files on your C-drive and your emails as well. Deleting the files you no longer want or need will not just free up some space (does anyone really care about space anymore?) but will make your backups run much more quickly and you will be able to find things so much more easily. Trust me on this – make it your new year's resolution! So here are my tips on what to look at to delete those unwanted files.

1. BEFORE YOU START deleting files, why not back them up first? Use a small portable drive (a “thumb” drive that plugs into your USB port) and copy everything you

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## Is “Refurbished” Worth the Price?

By Paul Baecker

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 thereafter.

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 refurbishing 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 considering (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!!!

This is an online article about doing your homework when shopping for refurbished products. You can snag discounts as high as 50% off on smartphones, tablets, computers and associated devices when looking for a refurbished unit, but you’ve got to do your homework. <https://lifehacker.com/when-should-i-buy-refurbished-electronics-5885492>

*News and/or Opinion from Paul Baecker,  
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## The Next Drawing

The regular drawing for next meeting whenever that happens, will be \$50 gift certificate from Forest Inn, a \$25 gift card from Pizza Ranch and Menards and a 1Tb flash drive, plus some misc. items.

## Joke from Joe II

**Can we uninstall 2020 and reinstall it? I believe it has a virus.**

## Cable or Air? – What’s your choice?

By Phil Sorrentino

Most TVs default to Cable, so if you get your TV programming via a cable company like Spectrum or Frontier, you don’t have to answer this question. But if you want to get “broadcast TV,” you will have to select “air” when given the choice. (Your specific television may use the term “broadcast” or over the air (OTA) instead of “air”.)

Way back in the 30’s/40’s when Television was being developed, the inventors had to establish the bandwidth for a broadcast television channel. Based on the video and audio information needed to be packed into the signal, the decision was made to allocate 6 MHz to a broadcast channel. So every television broadcast channel signal was designed to take up 6 MHz of bandwidth. Remember, that was in the prehistoric days of Analog television signals. We are now in the digital television age, as evidenced by the many nice slim, large screen TVs around us. If you’ll remember, this transition took place way back in 2009, June 12, 2009, to be exact. That was the day our old Television sets could no longer bring us entertainment and

information unless we acquired an analog to digital converter box. The government even gave us the opportunity to purchase two of these devices for \$35 each, in advance of the transition, so we could make the transition and not miss a single television show. (I only had one TV at the time, so I only purchased one of these devices, and believe it or not, I still have it. I used it for a while until I stepped into the digital television age. Anybody still need a converter box?)

Now we have digital television, but we still have the 6 MHz television channel bandwidth. The bandwidth of a signal is related to the modulation scheme used to create the modulated signal. The modulated signal must fit within the bandwidth allocated, otherwise, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) will be very unhappy. (First, just a quick technical explanation. Modulation is the process of putting a signal (video or audio) on a carrier frequency signal. The carrier frequency signal (think WCTQ is on 96.3 MHz) is the frequency used to carry the signal from the transmitting antenna to the

receiving antenna. Then at the receiving television set, the modulated signal is demodulated to recover the original signal. End of explanation.)

So when the transition to digital was being explored, in the latter days of the last millennium and the early days of this millennium, the broadcast industry and the cable TV industry had to decide what type of modulation scheme to use with the new digital television signals. (By the way, here’s a nearly useless piece of trivia, the analog television modulation scheme was called Vestigial Sideband modulation.)

When TV was invented there was only one industry, that was the broadcast industry, but now there two ways of getting television signals to customers, over the air, and over the cable. Due to the differences in transmitting signals over the air and transmitting signals over a cable, the two industries decided on two different modulation schemes. Here are two other pieces of trivia. The Over the air signal is modulated using an Eight Level Vestigial Sideband (8VSB) modulation technique and the cable signal is modulated using a

Quadrature Amplitude Modulation (QAM) technique.

The meaning of each of these is not germane to this discussion except for the fact that they are different. And it is that fact that forces the television manufacturer to include both types of de-modulators on the television. So, all digital televisions are capable of using either signal. Most, if not all, are defaulted to use the cable signal, probably because nowadays most people receive their television from a cable TV provider rather than over the air. So, if you are a cord-cutter, you will have to go into the settings of your TV and find the location where “Air” or “Cable” is chosen. Once you have made the “Air” choice, you will have to let the TV scan for all of the channels in your area. Once scanned, your TV will be set up for your local, over the air, television channels. (A cord cutter is someone who has decided to stop receiving their television entertainment from their cable provider, which means they no longer

get cable channels. They receive over the air television channels using an antenna, and they stream entertainment from such providers as Netflix, Amazon Prime, and Hulu, over their internet connection. Streaming services require a subscription, and there are some streaming providers that include cable channels.) Now we still have a 6 MHz broadcast channel but, because we have digital modulation schemes which are more efficient than the older analog modulation schemes, the television stations can now fit more channels into the 6 MHz bandwidth. That means that where we may have had one analog channel, say channel 8, we now have multiple digital sub-channels, maybe 8.1, 8.2, and 8.3. In fact, WEDU, the local educational channel has six sub-channels, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5, and 3.6, all transmitted within the basic 6 MHz bandwidth (isn't digital wonderful). Typically the base sub-channel, the .1 channel is a High Definition (HD) channel, and the other sub-channels are Standard Definition (SD) channels. (High or Standard Definition refers to the quality or resolution of the picture displayed on the television screen. HD is referred to as

1080p or sometimes 720p, while SD is referred to as 480p. (The number is the number of horizontal lines used to create the picture and the “p” indicates a progressive scan, as opposed to an interlaced scan that was used for analog TV.) SD is about the same quality as the old analog TV picture. HD channels will also typically provide 5.1 audio, but that's entirely another story.)

So it turns out that the original decision to allocate 6 MHz for a television channel seems to have been a pretty good design decision. Or, at least the designers of the digital television equipment have been very clever in using the allocated bandwidth to their and our advantage.

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December 2019  
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## Need Help with Windows 10? Try Troubleshooting

By Nancy DeMarte

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Microsoft has issued updates to its operating system for as many years as it has been in the software business. Early updates were primarily security-based. Later, feature updates were included on the second Tuesdays of the month. As Windows became more complex, some updates had errors or bugs which generated complaints from its users. A recent update, 1903, was no exception. First available in May 2019, it was a large update that included new security updates and new features. Immediately, some issues showed up in areas like screen brightness, audio, missing data, and loss of Wi-Fi connection. Most home users did not have enough

knowledge to fix many of these bugs. They had to wait for the next Windows update. (The current update is 1909, issued in November 2019.) In August 2019, in response to customer suggestions, Microsoft made the 1903 download optional. Users with older computers were encouraged to wait a bit longer before installing this update. Revisions to 1903 came out often during the summer of 2019. My Update History told me that I had 10 updates to 1903 between May and September 2019. The good news is that not only has Microsoft set up a system to fix problems more quickly, but it also has added some valuable new tools to provide help. One of them is called Troubleshoot. This is

not only a helpful tool but also something that I, a moderately low-tech person, can understand and use most of the time.

How Troubleshoot works depends on the seriousness of the problem.

**Critical Troubleshooting:** If a computer has a “critical problem” like a computer crash, Troubleshoot will fix the problem automatically.

**Recommended Troubleshooting:** If you find you have a problem that is not critical, you can use Recommended Troubleshooting. Send a message to Microsoft with as many details as you have. At times, you may be asked to give feedback about your computer’s operation. Microsoft will diagnose the problem

and give you suggestions for fixing it. Data is collected from Windows computers on a regular basis. This diagnostic data can be either Basic or Full, depending on the amount of data collected. Basic diagnostic data includes information about your device and its settings, and how well it is working. This data is used to keep your device running reliably and securely. An example of Full data may include how you use your apps or websites that you visit regularly. Full data is collected from only a small number of computers. If you want to find out what data is being collected from your computer, you can download the Diagnostic Data Viewer tool. (Start > Settings > Privacy > Diagnostics & feedback.)

I had a situation that needed Troubleshoot a few months ago. I was trying out the dark mode/light mode feature (white text on a dark background or black text on a light background). At the same time, I was trying to change the color of the taskbar. (Not a smart idea) Before I knew it, I was stuck in the dark mode with a black taskbar. I sent my feedback to Microsoft and was given the steps to get out of my dilemma. To use Recommended troubleshooting, a user must have access to the Internet.

Recommended Troubleshooting has four setting options for the kind of interactions you prefer with Microsoft.

Fix problems for me without asking  
Windows will automatically run

recommended troubleshooters for problems detected on your device without bothering you.

Tell me when problems get fixed  
Windows will tell you after recommended troubleshooters have solved a problem, so you know what happened.

3. Ask me before fixing problems (default)  
Microsoft lets you know when recommended troubleshooting is available. You can review the problem and changes before running the troubleshooter.

Only fix critical problems for me  
Windows will automatically run critical troubleshooters but won't

recommend troubleshooting for other problems. You will not get notifications for known problems, and you will need to manually troubleshoot these problems on your device.

(Windows key) > Settings > Update & Security. Click Troubleshoot and a list of possible problem areas will appear. (See illustration.) Select your problem area and click “Run the Troubleshooter button.”

problems have been addressed on your device, you can find a list in Settings > Update & Security. Under Troubleshoot, click “View History.” If you need more help, try the new Virtual Agent. She may be able to direct you to a solution.



Partial list of Windows 10 Problem areas

If you have Windows 10 update 1903 or 1909, you can find Troubleshoot by clicking Start

> Diagnostic & Feedback. Select “Only fix critical problems for me.”

If you want to see what

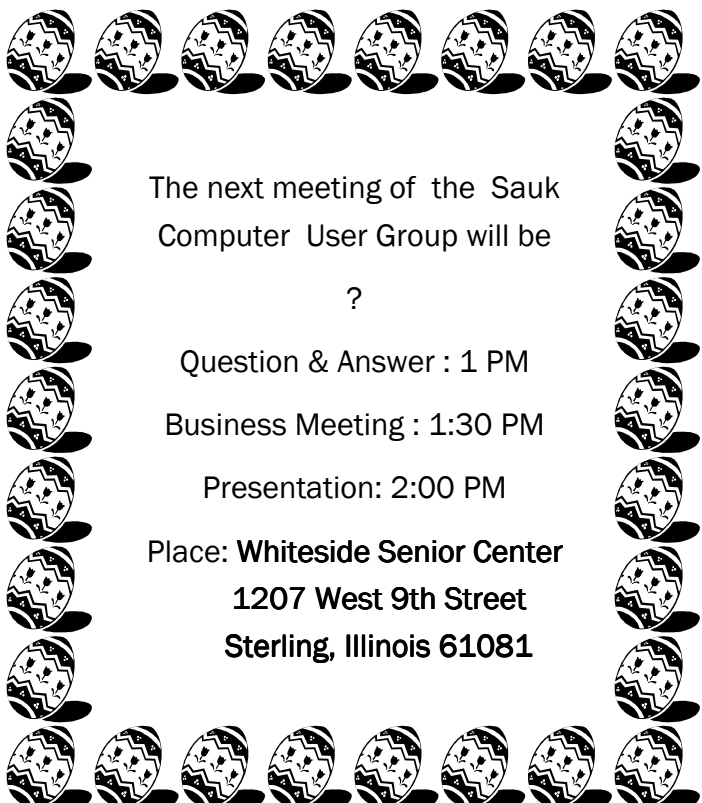
Troubleshoot was created to address



problems more quickly than waiting for the next Windows update. But if you would rather not have data collected by Microsoft, you can disable the Recommended Troubleshoot application. Click Settings > Privacy

*By Nancy DeMarte, Vice President & Education Chair, Sarasota Technology Users Group  
January 2020 issue, the STUG Monitor  
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There will be a Question & Answer Session starting at 1 PM the next time we meet. Bring any questions you have about your computer or problems you may be having. It will be conducted by: **Art Bendick & Neal Shipley**



The next meeting of the Sauk  
Computer User Group will be  
?

Question & Answer : 1 PM

Business Meeting : 1:30 PM

Presentation: 2:00 PM

Place: **Whiteside Senior Center**  
**1207 West 9th Street**  
**Sterling, Illinois 61081**

**Neal Shipley will be doing the presentation with  
videos from the 2020 Las Vegas Consumer Electronics Show**