



**Computer
Care**

We Make House Calls!

Since 1991

2015 Winter Edi-

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From my house to yours, Happy New Year!

February 1, 2015 starts the 24th anniversary of Computer Care!

With the new year, the arctic cold has joined us here in Western MA and the countdown to Spring has begun. As I write this, it's 30 degrees outside, so thoughts of Spring weather in the 60's or higher is *very* appealing. As is putting my kayak on the water and exploring the waterways via paddle power.

Late April starts my camping season as I'll be leading a BSA Troop 32 camping trip to Western NY (April 18-26) and a weeks worth of adventure featuring Niagara Falls.

SCAMS ARE RAMPANT

As I have stated in my two prior newsletters, *scams* of all types are rampant right now. Not only are there phishing (emails fishing for your information), spyware, malware, ransomware, scareware, phone scams, fake programs and applications, fake technical support and pretty much anything you can think of is also some sort of a scam.

It's so easy to click on a bad web link, without realizing it's bad and have a screen pop up demanding money or some other demand. Some spyware is a very close relation to a virus to the point where you can't really tell the difference. Some are extremely nasty and difficult to get rid of or impossible in one known instance.

If you get any of the following, do not respond, commit or pay the demand:

- Phone calls from Microsoft saying your computer is infected - **false - Microsoft or any software company will not do this, they have no way of knowing this. THIS IS A SCAM.**
- Phone calls from the FBI, NSA, Homeland Security or any agency - **THIS IS A SCAM.**
- Un-closeable web browser demanding a fee be paid to get your computer control back - **This is a SCAM. This can be cleaned in nearly all instances. Don't fall prey and do not pay under any circumstances**
- A un-closeable screen similar to above - **This is a scam too.**
- Unsolicited Email stating you have a package in the mail or from Fedex or UPS or another shipper - **This is a Phishing Scam - and not real, shippers do not have your email address and can not contact you this way. They would leave a note on your door, not in your email.**
- All this and more, **ALL SCAMS are meant to steal money from you.**

If any of the above happens to you, you need to contact Computer Care as soon as possible. We will come in and remove the infection and get you running properly again.

Now, there is a very nasty virus out there called Crypto Locker. This nasty bug infects your computer, encrypts all the files it can, often including documents and photographs. Then it announces to you that your data has been taken hostage unless a ransom of \$300 to \$500 is paid within 72 hours otherwise your data will be permanently lost.

This nasty Crypto Locker will infect both PC's and Macs. If you get infected by this, you should shut your computer completely off immediately & contact Computer Care! There are few fixes, and they must be done ASAP. Also, contact your local police and FBI as they want to know.

Having an up to date, aggressive antivirus helps. Running regular spyware scans helps. But the bad guys create this stuff faster than the good guys can protect you from it. Compare protecting your computer to getting a flu shot. You are better off getting the shot, the odds of you getting the flu are much less with the shot, but not 100% guaranteed. The antivirus and antispyware on a computer are just like your flu shot. Having it, keeping it up to date and running the best helps keep your data safe.

IS YOUR DATA SAFE?

Up to date protection is just part of keeping your data safe. Having a backup is essential for your data and priceless pictures and video. **Are your data, pictures and video being backed up?** If no is the answer, why is the question?

Computer Care can create a simple backup plan for you. Contact us any time. The cost of recovering infected data or from a crashed hard drive far, far outweighs the cost of putting a back up plan in place. Why wait?

Have you heard the phrase "The Internet Of Things" or IOT? It's a new catch phrase that you'll start hearing a lot about. What is the Internet of Things?

First there were computers (desktops and laptops), then smart phones, and then tablets and then what? The IOT is everything else that gets connected to your wifi. These can include thermostats, security, spot lights, speakers, light bulbs, electrical switches, cameras, locks and deadbolts. Wearable Technology devices are included too such as bracelets, watches, hats, glasses, shoes or anything that can be worn.

For the last few months, I've been part of a team "beta" testing the software in a NEST thermostat. The NEST is a unique thermostat, unlike any I've ever had before it. My prior thermostat was a touch screen model and not easy to program, override or re-program. While the NEST thermostat is about 4 times the cost (at \$250), it is simple to operate, simple to program or reprogram, simple to override. Very soon I hope to be a NEST Authorized reseller and Installer. It's very intuitive and learns from how you use it. It even knows when you approach and whether it's sitting in direct sunlight.

Hopefully you are using some sort of a programmable thermostat. These are also known as set back thermostats. You can program a time to warm up the house when you are home and cool down when you are not. This saves a lot of energy and a lot of money very quickly. For example, if you get up at 7am, it could be programmed to turn on and raise the temperature to 65 (ours goes to 63) so you can be comfy when you take your shower and have breakfast. Then at 8:30 am when everyone is gone, the temperature drops to 60, at 5:30 it's up to 67 and at bedtime back down to 60 for a good sleep temperature. It works the same way with whole house air conditioners too. If you're not doing this now, you are wasting a LOT of money heating an empty house. A programmable thermostat will pay for itself within a few short months.

With the NEST thermostat, there are additional features. Let's say you went out on a cold afternoon. Your thermostat is set to automatically raise the temperature at 5pm. But it's only 3:30 pm. Take your phone, start the app and turn the temperature up so the house is warm and comfy when you get home. You can monitor the status of the NEST on your Android or Iphone or computer. Every month it will give you energy usage reports, tell you when to change the air filter in the furnace and so much more. To learn more about NEST, go to www.nest.com.

How would you like to go home, wave your phone by the lock and have it open for you? Or log onto the app for the lock and find out who has used that entrance recently, manage who has electronic access. You can sit on the couch or anyplace with internet access, control the light above you or in the next room, control on and off times, dim the lights or program them all to do so. What about a light with a built in blue-tooth speaker? Not only control

the light features, but stream music and audio from your phone, tablet, computer wirelessly. How about programming a switch to turn on a lamp, tv, stereo or other items at a certain time?

WHY COMPUTER CARE?

Why do business with Computer Care? Unlike mass merchants such as Best Buy, Staples and others that just want to make the quick sale, Computer Care has a vested interest in keeping you productive, in keeping your computer operating in the best way for how you use your computer.

Buying products at a mass merchant means they do not care how you use your computer, just that you buy one before you leave their store so that the salesperson gets their commission. Once you're gone, they'll just repeat over and over again.

Whether you are interested in purchasing a new computer, printer, backup drive, wireless router or device or nearly anything, Computer Care can be your solution provider. We first learn how you are going to use the device, then we research and propose a few possible solutions to you. Once you make a decision, the product is then delivered and set up for your use. If need be, the item will be explained and any setup documentation will be provided to you to keep. Computer Care also keeps a copy of some of the settings as a backup with your contact information.

We sell and service the extremely reliable Lenovo Business, HP Business and Acer computers. We are authorized by all three and have been for years. There are many other vendors that we are authorized to sell such as Samsung, Epson, Lacie, Hawking, D-Link, Verbatim, Brother, Microsoft, Logitech and many others. We choose to sell reliable products that operate for years. Why buy a inferior product that will fail too soon and need to be replaced two or three times as often as a reliable product?

Should a question or problem arise, contact Computer Care and we would answer your question, remedy the problem or in some cases research the issue and get back to you. Our main goal is to keep your computer operating so it is available *any* time you want to use it.

Computer Care SELLS COMPUTERS. We sell proven, reliable, business grade computers. Business grade computers that are built with better quality, faster components, better warranties and better support. Business grade computers have an average life of 5 or more years versus consumer grade computers that are meant to fail at around 18 months. Why compromise and deal with an inferior and possibly troublesome computer? Contact Computer Care the next time you are ready to buy a new computer!

REMOTE CONTROL

Everyone that purchases a computer from Computer Care gets put on a remote control system. Each computer has a unique username and password. No two are alike. When you need help, you contact us, and we schedule a time to remotely log in and remote control your computer from our office. Sometimes you just need help, or need help figuring how to do something or remedy a small problem. As long as you have internet access, we can remote in.

Often times the remote log in would be at a reduced price from a on-site service call. Save some money from a full onsite service call. Call Computer Care for more information at (413) 348-3289.

Keep in mind that every question is important. If it's important to you, then it's important to me.

Thank you for your business!!

Larry Krainson
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