



**Computer  
Care**

*We Make House calls!*

**Spring 2018 Issue**

**Our 27<sup>th</sup> year in  
business!**

**computercare@comcast.net**

**(413) 348-3289**

*2018 started Computer Care's 27<sup>th</sup> year in business!*

Many of you often ask me what grade that little boy I used to take with me to client appointments is in, thinking he is about to graduate high school. Many of you remember that he used to sit on your couch reading one of his books or watching TV or playing with your dog. Well, fast forward to the end of 2017 and that little boy is not little any more. In December 2017 Jacob earned a Bachelor of Science Degree in Outdoor Recreation Management. Jacob is nearly 23 now and is starting his first post college job in the middle of March. Both Faye and I are so proud of his accomplishments and look forward to hearing about his new adventures as part of America's workforce. Jacob will be working as Director of Recreation at the Grey's Point Camping Resort in Topping, Virginia.

What I hear from my clients is that *reliability* is one of the most important features you need from your computer. For over 12 years now, Lenovo Business, HP Business and Acer Business have been the three main brands that Computer Care sells. All three are very reliable with Lenovo being the most reliable. They are the industry standard for big businesses and for those that need that day to day reliability for years to come. HP Business and Acer are 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> in reliability and also very good choices. All other brands are far behind or can not even compare. The business computers are designed to last years longer than *consumer* models of those brands that are sold by the mass merchants.

*Scams and more scams.* They are even more prevalent than they have been in the past. Not only are they going after seniors, now they're targeting everyone. You're all getting the constant phone calls, emails (phishing), web site overlays and whatever new way to fool, confuse and scam you out of your credit card or other financial info.

**Don't be fooled! Microsoft, the IRS, whomever will NEVER call you! Never give out personal info. Never!**

**If you did not call them, hang up on them!**

*How are you keeping track of passwords?* After all these years, many people are still using simple to guess passwords. This has to stop in order to keep your information safe. You MUST create a longer and harder to guess password that contains upper case, lower case, symbols and numbers and should be a minimum of 12 characters long. You should not use the same password you created for your banking as the one you use for your email, to sign on with or read the Times. You need to create different passwords for credit cards, banking, investments, email, and everything. But those that are financial based keep different. That way, if one gets hacked, you don't want to make it so easy that someone could log in to another service with that same password and grab all your money.

*It's also extremely important* that you write down your passwords! You can't just create a password, use it that day and forget it. Somewhere down the road, you're going to need that password again. Computer Care sells password storage books. They look like an old fashioned telephone directory which makes finding what you need very easy. We always carry them in our car, ask and we'll bring one in.

*What you don't want* to do is save your passwords on sticky notes or paper scraps. Those get lost so easily and can never be found when you need them. By keeping them organized, when you need them, you can find them easily.

*These days most people* are on their 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> generation of computer. At each generation, more and more data needs to be transferred between the new and old computer. But what happens if the hard drive in the original computer fails? Or if you drop your laptop and it breaks? Do you have a back up? So many people still tell me they do not.

*For a small investment,* Computer Care can set up a backup device and a program that will automatically backup your data periodically This is especially important if you use your computer for business! What would happen if your hard drive failed? How long would it take you to recreate your QuickBooks data, Point of Sale data or documents if the originals were gone and you didn't have a backup? A backup is an inexpensive way to preserve your data. Sure, there are pay services to recover your data. To recover a hard drive, they start at \$1500 and go up! Why take the chance?

*There are two main types of backups.* One is data only, which is always extremely important. This is perfect for a home or some small business users. The other is an image backup which basically is like taking a picture of your hard drive in its entirety and having that as the backup on an external drive. If something were to happen with the main hard drive, that image could be copied to a new hard drive and you would have your hard drive settings, data, everything back in a fairly short

amount of time. With an image, you could also recover just certain files or folders, you do not need to restore the whole hard drive.

**What would happen** if you experienced a “Ransomware Attack”? First, what is Ransomware? It is a virus that attacks your computer, disables your security software and then encrypts your data in a way that requires a special password to access it. But the Ransom must be paid first and it’s usually \$500 or more and then if you’re lucky, they’ll send you the password to decrypt the locked files. If you’re not lucky, you won’t get anything or the password will not work.

**Why not decrease your chances** by having security software on your computer that would prevent and protect your computer from a Ransomware attack? Computer Care sells such software. It’s one of the paid versions of Avast that will protect you and your data. We are an authorized Avast Reseller and can sell, install and configure Avast remotely for you. Please call or email us to arrange an install.

**Even though** Computer Care has been working for many of you for many years, we still hear “oh, you sell computers?” or other statements. Below is a list of some of the main things that Computer Care can do for you (and your friends):

- Sell new computers & laptops (Lenovo, HP & Acer business), monitors, printers, backup drives & more
- Upgrade and repair your existing computer
- Speed up your existing computer
- Share & connect devices wirelessly
- Remove viruses and spyware & install protection
- Support & Train individuals or groups
- Sell & Set up wireless and wired networking
- Nearly anything to do with a Windows computer

**These are just some** of the things that Computer Care addresses. There are many, many other things we do for our clients that are not listed above. Please contact us to discuss your situation.

**I often get asked** what I use on my computer.

- This newsletter was typed on Libre Office Writer as a word processor. I also use Libre Office Calc for spreadsheets. I no longer use Microsoft Office and have not missed it.
- Google Chrome is my main browser with Mozilla Firefox as my backup.
- Gmail is my email client. My [computercare@comcast.net](mailto:computercare@comcast.net) & other personal email addresses all come into Gmail.

- Along with Gmail is Google Calendar where my life is scheduled. I color code activities which works well.
- On my phone I use CloudCal which takes Google Calendar and gives me a better way to store, save and create appointments. I highly recommend it if you have an Android Phone
- My phone is an Android Samsung Galaxy S8+. A fantastic upgrade from my old Samsung Galaxy S5. A superb phone.
- Google Keep on my laptop and phone. An easy way to create ToDo lists and follow through with them. I have a 2 page info sheet I can email you to help you get started. It’s pretty awesome and much better than those sticky notes.
- For searching data, I bought the pay version of Copernic Desktop Search. It not only searches my hard drive, but also my DropBox account, Google Drive and many others. Now I can find all the docs easily. Especially when I save them in a logical location and can’t find them in the future.
- TeamViewer is what I use to remote in to your computer and remotely control your computer.
- Google Photos to backup my photos on my phone and laptop. Google offers unlimited photo storage when using their Photos application.

**Those are my** main programs and apps that I use daily. They work great for me and can also work for you to make your life easier and more organized.

**If you or your** friends, family or work associates need some computer help, **call Computer Care. We Make House Calls!**

**You can reach** Computer Care at 413-348-3289 for calls and texts or [computercare@comcast.net](mailto:computercare@comcast.net) for email.

**Hopefully soon**, the warm weather will arrive and the threat of snow, cold weather and ice will be gone. We can all go outside to enjoy the sunny warm days. I am looking forward to getting my kayak on the water, visiting new campgrounds and making new adventures with friends and family.

**I look forward to talking with you and seeing you soon.**

Larry  
Computer Care