

STAN'S KOMPUTER KORNER

STAN PALEN

This will be a regular column. The author is a watchmaker and he is retired from the Navy as a Supervisory General Engineer. He has been involved with computers since the early sixties. He used to purchase all the hardware and software for a group of 40 scientists and engineers. He has marketed Swim Meet programs nationally. He was an associate editor of the Apple II section of the Washington Apple Pie, a computer user's group based in Washington DC.

This column includes computer information for IBM compatible computers in the form of hints, helps, suggestions and news. Please submit your questions to Stan Palen, 8283 Oakwood Drive, King George, VA 22485 or via email to spalen@crosslink.net. Stan also has a web page located at www.stanpalen.com (Please note that this column is often submitted for publication 30 to 60 days before publication.) My phone number is 540 775-7027.

The installation of Windows 7 on my Vista machine was a piece of cake. I did not have any problems with it. It took a while for everything to complete. I was able to install printer drivers for the printers on my network that are connected to an XP machine. My MicroSet timer program also works just like it did when the machine had a Vista operating system. It starts and runs quite quickly. All of my network connections are still working after the upgrade. The visual interface is neat. If you have several windows minimized and hover your mouse over the icon at the bottom of the screen, you will see several small windows that show each one large enough to tell which one you want to use. If you shake a window you are in, it will minimize all the other open windows. You can click on the right most box on the taskbar at the bottom and all the open windows will become transparent so you can see your desktop. That way you can easily open another application. If you right click on an application icon, it will show recently used documents so you can easily reload. The task bar at the bottom of the screen is significantly more useful. If you want more information, go to Microsoft's web site. Windows 7 is not on my main machine, so I have not played with all it's features yet. I bought the 3 license version because I intend to upgrade at least one more machine. I still recommend that you do not try to upgrade from XP to Windows 7.

My main machine is a little over a year old. It came with CA Anti-Virus free for a year. It was pretty comprehensive. It pretty much covered all aspects of computer

protection. After the first year, they want a substantial sum per year. It appeared to me that they wanted that sum for each computer. I might have done it if it would cover all my active machines. I uninstalled CA and went to Microsoft's web site and downloaded Microsoft's Security Essentials to my machine. If anyone knows the intricacies of Microsoft systems, it should be Microsoft. It seems to be doing a pretty good job and the price is right – Free.

Do you do your taxes on your computer? It is strongly recommended that you move your tax files to a thumb drive or something similar. Copying them to the thumb drive is not good enough because it leaves a copy on your system. If someone gets into your machine, they look for tax documents. Hackers get more sophisticated every day. There are several programs that will permanently delete files available on the Internet. Just do a search on delete files. I have several years of Turbo Tax files on my machine and I am going to take them off and run the program using the files on a thumb drive. The Undelete Free Disk Wipe program is free and should do the job just fine, but it will only do one disk at a time. There are lots of programs that will do selected files are out there, but there is a cost factor.

I have purchased a new router to try and speed things up with my Internet connection. I tried to set it up, but it wanted to do things it's own way. I have several wireless devices in the house set up on a network I called W. The new router does not recognize it at all. I would have to reprogram all the devices in the house. One of these days I will try to connect the old router to the new one for all the old stuff that does not need speed. It will still mean reprogramming 3 computers and then getting them to talk to each other again. It took a while to get them talking the last time. Hopefully this will take less time than redoing everything. Aren't computers fun?

Did you know it is possible to detect the approximate geographical location of the user from an IP address? Enter the IP address at <http://ipgeoinfo.com> to see if it works for you.

Have you tried hooking up two or more computers with long cables? A member tried that and it took a while to discover that the first two cables were not working. A properly constructed network cable should work to at least 100 ft.

A friend bought a refurbished laptop from Leveno and could not get the wireless part to work. It took quite a while and lots of frustration before she was told that her model had a switch to turn the wireless on and off.

If you have questions about any of the above or other computer questions, please feel free to email me at spalen@crosslink.net or stan@stanpalen.com.