

# QBITS

Quad-Cities Computer Society  
Newsletter for November 2009  
Volume 27, number 10

[www.qcs.org](http://www.qcs.org)

Wednesday  
November 11, 2009  
7:00 PM  
**Best Buy  
Electronic Holiday  
Gifts!**

The QCS thanks NBS,  
the host of the [qcs.org](http://qcs.org) site  
**Network Business Systems NBS**  
[www.nbson.com](http://www.nbson.com)

## This Month in *QBITS*..

Cyber News!.....	3
Commercial Software Available for Free.....	4
The Deals Guy.....	5
Useful Computer Acronyms :).....	6
Insight: How the World Actually Works! :).....	6
Vista Ultimate Raffle.....	7
Balanzza Ergo Digital Luggage.....	7
thousands of free books available online.....	7
Windows 7 Party.....	8
How to Be a Geek Goddess.....	9
Computer & Internet Tips and Tricks.....	9

Views and opinions expressed  
by presenters  
do not necessarily reflect those  
of the Quad Cities Computer Society

**Monthly meetings are open to the  
general public.**

## **QCS Review Computer Maintenance & A Look at Windows7**

presented by Gary Stanley  
[gary.stanley.net](http://gary.stanley.net)  
[filehippo.com](http://filehippo.com)

by Joe Durham  
coeditor

This month's meeting was a testament to three things: the power of television, the draw of a well known and liked speaker and the attraction of computers.

The QCS thanks Paula Sands for the wonderful publicity. Gary Stanley was able to present a synopsis of his presentation on Paula Sands Live on Channel 6 in the Quad Cities.

Gary Stanley was able draw members and visitors to our meeting because he is a past QCS member who is well liked and admired for his computer knowledge. And lastly, everyone wants their computer to run well and are fascinated by the new gadgetry over the horizon, in this case Windows7 which will be officially released by Microsoft on October 22nd.

Gary Stanley was able to take these opportunities and weave a delightful and very useful presentation of the care and feeding of our computers in the 21st century. He gave us a bit of his past history as a disc jockey, aviator and now sharing his computer savvy on the Internet.

He has seen and experienced all of the versions of Windows as they been released: Windows98 through Windows7. The release of Windows ME was a bust in his view. The impending release of Windows 7 will open new avenues for computers.

But before we get to Windows 7 we must learn how to give our computers TLC ( tender loving care). Gary presented to us, from his long experience in computing, three ways to make our computers runs faster, more smoothly and virus free.

With winter just around the corner, be sure and check the web site for cancellations!

—continued on next page—

The QCS is a member of



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(563-332-8679)  
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The QCS will then arrange to email your next issue to you.



Moving? Send an address change to:  
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### *QBITS*

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The Quad-Cities Computer Society or QCS is an Iowa nonprofit organization for charitable, scientific, and educational purposes primarily to educate the public concerning the advantages and disadvantages of microcomputers and to publish a newsletter for distribution to members, area libraries and educational institutions. The QCS is recognized as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit charitable and educational organization by the IRS.

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The only thing you need to remember are three words :) "[gary.stanley.net](http://gary.stanley.net)" His web pages have a System Maintenance link [tinyurl.com/5bs7zz](http://tinyurl.com/5bs7zz) at the bottom of CyberNews which is displayed every month. Within this link are the steps he explained to us.

First we need an antivirus program to protect our computers from virus infection on the Internet. Do not use Norton or McAfee Antivirus programs. Gary said that these programs are resource hogs that will slow down your computer. Remove them from your system by going to Start --> Control Panel --> Add and Remove Programs.

A free program AVG is more preferable. This program is widely used and updates its virus definition database daily.

Next download and run the program CCleaner. Several years ago Gary purchased this program for \$100. Now it is free. Once you have downloaded this program there is a link on his System Maintenance page for instructions to CCleaner, how to install and use it. [www.gary.stanley.net/ccleaner.htm](http://www.gary.stanley.net/ccleaner.htm)

The next computer defense is to fight and remove spyware from your system. These small ad based programs track your Internet activity as a marketing tool and use up resources on your machine and eventually will slow it to a crawl. Gary suggested that we use Ad-Aware for this purpose.

By visiting [filehippo.com](http://filehippo.com) you can download and install these three programs easily. Windows will stop and ask you if this is a safe program to install. You need to click the Active X message bar at the top of your window and click download to continue the process.

AVG runs automatically everyday. CCleaner and Ad-aware should be run often. By so doing your machine will be free of virus and Internet clutter. The computer will thank you and your computing experience will be more enjoyable.

After installing these fine utilities Gary rounded out his discussion by advocating that we Defrag our computers at least once a month. Defrag is a windows application. Gary recommended that we open up Start --> Programs --> Accessories --> System Tools --> Defrag. Right click on the word Defrag and drag it to your desktop so that you will have a handy icon reminder to do this task often.

When you run Defrag, sometimes it will report that you don't need to do it. Gary recommends that you do it anyway. It is an efficient method to rearrange all of the data that has been scattered about your hard drive. Defrag will put all the pieces in order and put a more responsive system at your hands.

Finally an overriding command from Gary was to BACKUP your data regularly; a full backup then incremental backups thereafter. Preferably, and because the price has gone down, to an external hard drive. Gary has two 1.5 terabyte external hard drives which backup his system and his wife Diana's computer. They additionally cross-backup their data on each others external hard drive. For additional security he physically takes his external hard drive with him when he travels from home. This protects his data from theft and a natural disaster at one location.

Gary recounted the misery that he has witnessed among friends and associates that have lost valuable data and photos because they did not back up there systems.

The second half of Gary's presentation was a look at Windows 7. He related that if you use Vista you will be comfortable in the transition as the menu scheme is similar. He noted that if your computer is over 5 years old it is likely not a candidate for Windows7 and you would be better off purchasing a new computer system that has Windows7 installed.

Most of the newer systems will have 8 GB of ram or more. Many of

the older computers would just not be able to physically expand to these memory levels.

Visually, Windows7 handles the Vista Sidebar application more smoothly. You can now select which and how many sidebars you want to use. Now you can drag them to any location.

Gary took that opportunity while discussing this new sidebar feature to explain that a desktop with only a few essential icons on it is the preferable operating scheme. Many desktop icons use up resources and present confusing access as you try to jump from one to another. He uses the Start ---> Program display to run programs.

One of the nice features of Windows7 is the ability to switch among programs by selecting thumbnail windows of them on the screen. The taskbar easily indicated the active applications by surrounding the running programs with a square transparent window.

He did note that Windows7 will not come with an email client. Microsoft has removed that application in order to comply with anti-trust provisions of the law. You will have to download an email client like Thunderbird.

However Windows7 will preserve you email data if you are upgrading from a previous Windows OS on your computer.

Finally Windows7 has some technological advances to claim. If your computer monitor has touch screen hardware, Windows 7 will adapt to it and make it available. Also home networking is easily accomplished in Windows7. You can share data, photos, video and music among your household computer simply and directly.

In summary Gary has been beta testing Windows7 throughout the year and the final release candidate for several months. He has had no problems with it.

The QCS would like to thank Gary for his easy going, humorous and very informative exploration of

computing at home. Four QCS members won a one-hour diagnostic visit from Gary in their home before he heads back to sunny Phoenix area away from the chilly and foreboding October weather of the Quad Cities. He plans to return again next year in September to visit his Quad-Cities area friends!

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## Cyber News!

[gary.stanley.net/cyber\\_news.htm](http://gary.stanley.net/cyber_news.htm)

[gary-stanley.blogspot.com/](http://gary-stanley.blogspot.com/)  
by Gary Stanley  
copyright 2009

Windows 7 will feature "Touch Screen" capabilities, but in order to do that you will need a touch screen capable monitor. HP and Dell make an all-in-one touch screen computer which means that everything is built into the monitor. This is a futuristic innovation and kind of fun to play with, but I think most of us will stick with the mouse, at least for the immediate future. For you "techies," more from *Computer-world*. [tinyurl.com/yzh2t76](http://tinyurl.com/yzh2t76)

Will the average user immediately make the change to Windows 7? That won't happen, but if you have been contemplating a new machine there should be no hesitation now with your decision as everything I have read, and my personal experience has been positive. One nice thing about upgrading is that prices on computers have never been so low! If you have XP and things are working well, there's certainly no hurry to upgrade. Here's another opinion on the subject from PC World. [tinyurl.com/mzylp4](http://tinyurl.com/mzylp4)

I continually remind you how important it is to back up your documents, photos, music, address book and favorites. With the explosion of digital photography and downloading of your favorites songs, it would be a catastrophe if you lost them all because your computer died. Backing up those files to an external hard drive is the answer,

but just buying one and plugging it into your computer is only part of the solution. Watch Ken Colburn [tinyurl.com/yh558tf](http://tinyurl.com/yh558tf) of the Data Doctors explain the top five mistakes people make when backing up.

I have had the original iPhone for two years and have loved it. Now that my contract is up I've been faced with a decision to upgrade to the new iPhone 3Gs or go back to Verizon. With the iPhone you have to be on AT&T. People love the iPhone but don't have kind words for the carrier. There would be two advantages to me staying with AT&T and upgrading. First, the new 3Gs has more features, is faster, takes movies, and can take advantage of the fast 3G network. Second, with my wife on Verizon, one of us should always have a signal while out on the road. Well, that's what I did and after having the new model for a couple of weeks I'm very happy. The 3Gs is an incredible piece of technology! If you would like to watch a video about this phone you can do it here. [tinyurl.com/ld96lm](http://tinyurl.com/ld96lm)

You all have heard the term "Fiber Optics." It's a way to transfer signals and data at extremely fast speeds using light as the transfer mechanism. Intel has just announced "Light Peak" which will be the future of hooking up peripherals to your computer or TV. Read more from CNET.

Health tip: With the swine flu still running around and all other contagious diseases, a good preventative is to frequently wash your hands. I think of this every time I walk around a grocery store with my hands on the handle of a shopping cart; lots of germs and bacteria hiding there! Try, at all times, to keep your hands away from your mouth. Wash your hands with warm water and soap for at least 15 seconds especially before eating.

2010 Census. The United States Census is taken every 10 years and

—continued next page—

questionnaires will be mailed out in March. I'm addressing this now as there are already alerts being circulated about scams. Answering the questionnaire is required by the U.S. Constitution and the forms have been shortened this time around. This form will be mailed and if you don't respond another one will be mailed. If you don't respond the second time a census taker will come to your house. Don't let this happen as there will certainly be impostors taking advantage of people which could lead to identity theft. At no time will census information be emailed. You can educate yourself about the census at [www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov).

Are you making the best use of your favorite search engine? I get lots of emails asking computer questions. I am flattered in your trust, but might suggest that you try an Internet search first. Sometimes that is what I have to do in order to answer your email. No matter if you use Microsoft's Internet Explorer browser or Firefox, there is a search box in the upper right hand corner. Type your question in the window and click Enter on your keyboard. Shazam, instant answers, and hopefully one of them will solve your problem. I use Google search dozens of times every day

As I write this paragraph I'm listening to the piano music of Bernward Koch, a most talented musical composer from Germany. You can't go wrong with any song he has recorded but if you love soft, relaxing, romantic music, you will love his CD "Walking through Clouds." If you have iTunes, you can hear samples of his artistry and download your favorites. Or, you can go to YouTube and listen. Here's one [tinyurl.com/ykcvenb](http://tinyurl.com/ykcvenb), entitled "Wonderful Glider. And another called "Bahia Dawn." [tinyurl.com/yjxhdp5](http://tinyurl.com/yjxhdp5) Oh, just one more. [tinyurl.com/yzrtddb](http://tinyurl.com/yzrtddb) I often play this kind of music when we are camping, having a glass of wine and starrng at the heavens. Ah, now that's pure relaxation!

**Photo Tip of the Month:** Unless you're taking pictures at your child's birthday party, don't rush the project. With most shots you'll have time to think about composing a great picture that tells a story. Take the time to really look through your view finder or LCD and ascertain if things look right. If your subject is a person, does he or she have a tree growing from the top of his or her head? Is there a distraction on one side of the frame that can be corrected by repositioning? Don't just snap photos, be your own director!

Check out my photos that I've taken from around the world. You'll find over 1,100 pictures in 38 different galleries. We have had over 245,000 views on our Photo Site, [www.pbase.com/gary\\_stanley](http://www.pbase.com/gary_stanley) thanks in part to Cyber News readers!

Check out my blog. There you will find thoughts on many subjects and occasionally find supplements to Cyber News such as Virus alerts or other computer information that I think might be important to you. Read my recent entry regarding Facebook. Blog. [gary-stanley.blogspot.com/](http://gary-stanley.blogspot.com/)

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## Commercial Software Available for Free

By Ira Wilsker

**WEBSITES:**  
[dottech.org](http://dottech.org)  
[dottech.org/category/freebies](http://dottech.org/category/freebies)  
[www.giveawayoftheday.com](http://www.giveawayoftheday.com)  
[game.giveawayoftheday.com](http://game.giveawayoftheday.com)

Computer users often seem to be in the market for additional software. Many users even seem to have an addiction to new software, seeming to have an insatiable urge to try something new. There are many online resources that have enormous libraries of free software

to download, such as **download.com**, MajorGeek, and TUCOWS, but other than some pirate and hacker sites, there are only a few sites where commercial software can legitimately be downloaded free.

One of my personal favorites is **dotTech.org**, which has proven to be an excellent resource when it comes to legitimately getting free copies of commercial software. New titles appear on an almost daily basis under the "freebies" category ([dottech.org/category/freebies](http://dottech.org/category/freebies)), and are usually available for a very limited time or a limited number of downloads. The "freebies" page has an editorial comment at the top that was posted by the founder of dotTech, "Ashraf" says, "I gave up my 'illegal' activities long ago – but I still like freebies. Here you will see posts about how to attain commercial software for free – 100% legit!" Currently, there are 52 commercial software titles available as a free download, but this number is dynamic and changes frequently as old offers expire, and new titles are added. As with bargains anywhere else, the rule is that if you see something you like, get it now, because it may not be there later. Ashraf and the editors of **dotTech.org** review each software title, and I have found the reviews to be reliable and accurate. There is also an open blog on each listing where users who have downloaded and installed the software have left comments as to the functionality of the software, a feature that I have found useful.

DotTech's selection of software is varied, but seems to favor performance utilities. While many of the software publishers listed on dotTech may not be familiar to Americans, they are mostly European in origin, and generally have a very good to excellent reputation. These lesser known publishers will typically allow their commercial software to be promoted on dotTech in order to become better known, and to sometimes get leads

to sell their other software products. Mostly, the titles available are the latest versions, but in a few cases the free downloads were of a previous but recent version. There are two very good commercial products that I use regularly thanks to dotTech, and I do periodically receive emailed promotions from the publishers about their other wares.

These promotions are more sporadic than regular, and not so frequent as to be irritating. Both have unsubscribe links on their promotions, but I have found them often interesting, as their products that they promote are often offered at deep discounts. One recent example was the German software publisher, Ashampoo that sent an email that offered almost all of its products for a flat price of only \$10 each. It should be noted that Ashampoo is not some little software publisher, as it is very popular in Europe, and claims to have over 10 million registered users of its software, with 97 million copies installed. This is precisely the type of company that promotes its software on **dotTech.org**.

Some of the commercial software that has recently been offered free on dotTech include Ashampoo Office 2008, Ashampoo Internet Accelerator 2, USB Safely Remove 4.1, Comfort Keys Lite, Ashampoo Burning Studio 2010, O&O CleverCache 6 Professional, WinX DVD Ripper Platinum, CyberLink PowerDirector 7 Ultra, Paragon Drive Backup 9.0 Professional, EVEREST Ultimate Edition 4.6, EASEUS Partition Master Pro, and dozens of other titles. The full list can be found online at

**dotech.org/category/freebies**. I subscribe to dotTech's RSS feed (**dottech.org/feed**) and email alerts (**dottech.org/e-mail-reminders**) so I can keep up with the latest software giveaways. I routinely download and install the new offerings to satiate my desire to try new software; generally, I have been very satisfied with the offerings and have found them to be generally excellent. For those that I no longer

want, they have been easy to uninstall with their integral uninstall function or from Add/Remove Programs. In addition to commercial software, dotTech also has some good software tips and hints, as well as reviews of other software products.

Speaking of giveaways, what may arguably be the most popular software giveaway website is "Give Away of the Day" at **www.giveawayoftheday.com**. The software on that website must be downloaded and installed by midnight Pacific time (2am Central time), or the install feature will fail, but if it is installed by the deadline, a fully registered copy of the software is yours to keep. Every 24 hours, at midnight Pacific Time, a new software title becomes available. Software available on Give Away of the Day has been of all types, including utilities, video and audio editors, security software, and other genres, and is often from major software publishers. It needs to be noted that the software downloaded and registered through Give Away of the Day is not eligible for support, and does not qualify for free upgrades. It should also be noted that during the registration process, which must be done while online, some other utilities may appear on the registration popup that may be installed, and by my choice, I never select them for installation.

Give Away of the Day often has dozens of comments and reviews of that day's software by the time dawn breaks in the U.S., these comments being posted by users mostly in Asia and Europe, where the software has been available for download for several hours. If the software looks interesting, I click on the icon to go to the download page, and review the comments prior to downloading. The reviews are summarized with a "thumbs up" or "thumbs down" rating; if the majority of reviewers likes the software, I will seriously consider downloading it; if the "thumbs down" are in the majority, then I

will usually not download it. I also read the reviews and comments to corroborate that the software will install and function on my operating system. I also find references in the review to competing, often free, competitors to be generally helpful, and a source of other software to try. It is interesting that often the first, and usually the most comprehensive review posted is from Ashraf, the same person that runs dotTech. These reviews list the good and bad features of the program offered, as well as a link to a full review on dotTech.

Give Away of the Day has a sister site, Game Give Away of the Day, which has commercial computer games available for download. Unlike the parent site, new games are not typically available every day, but it is still a worthwhile website for gamers to visit on a frequent basis just to see if something new has been posted.

Both Give Away of the Day and Game Give Away of the Day offer RSS feeds and email alerts to notify those interested of any new offerings. I subscribe to both in order to be informed of those offerings.

These websites have had some great commercial software available at a great price (free), which I use on a regular basis. They are most worthy of a regular visit in order to take advantage of the offerings.

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**From The DealsGuy**  
by Bob (The Cheapskate)  
Click  
**bobclick@bellsouth.net**  
**Greater Orlando Computer**  
**Users Group**

### **I Used That Good Tech Support Again!**

I seem to get a lightning strike each year and in spite of having adequate protection, I still lose some equipment. It knocked out my

—continued next page—

favorite toy again, (my weather station), my router and a few other items. It's hard to safeguard the weather station because the wind anemometer sits on the roof, a vulnerable place for lightning. It seems the DSL filters saved my phones because two phones wouldn't work until I replaced the DSL filters in their phone lines. The phone line for my DSL modem was protected through the UPS, but my router no longer worked, so I finally replaced it. The new D-Link router had a disk with a setup wizard on it that worked fine for the setup, also configuring the security. However, I later found that my Ricoh printer wouldn't print. Other routers I've used sent print jobs just fine without any special configuration. After a lot of "trial and error," I decided my router wasn't talking to the printer, which connects to the network, so I called Ricoh.

A guy named Larry answered immediately and we went to work. He tried many things that included pinging the printer, which worked, but the printer still refused to print, even though the computer was now talking to the printer. He said my new router, a D-Link, didn't like my printer and he would have to keep trying port changes. After an hour, he found the right combination and I was printing. As before, Ricoh tech support answered in Atlanta and was easy to work with. He kept his cool, even when his new settings didn't seem to work, or I made a mistake when instructed to punch certain keys.

I noticed my DSL was running slower than usual, but running the computer directly from the modem worked fine. I was unable to find the D-Link free tech support phone number on the Web site so I e-mailed them for a phone number and finally was able to call their tech support. After some difficult time, they improved it. They said they were based in California, but didn't sound like it. Seems the modem and the router both had the same IP address.

However, I now couldn't print again, but another call to Ricoh fixed that. I told a friend about the good experience with Ricoh and he asked if I had talked to HP's tech support lately. He said he called HP tech support recently and talked to a guy in India. He had problems understanding him and nothing they tried was working. He said the guy finally hung up on him; and still no solution. My friend is quite computer literate so I doubt he was the problem.

### **Someone Sent Me This, But Didn't Want To Be Named**

Ever wonder if somebody might have plugged a USB device into your computer for some reason? People sometimes like playing tricks on you (like a surprise midi file you didn't expect), or might browse through your HD and even copy items to, or from, a flash drive or some other media, but this product might provide some details if a flash drive was used. USBDeview finds out what USB devices are currently connected to your computer and also sees which devices were connected before. It tells you the time the device was plugged/unplugged (if the machine hasn't been rebooted). Other information possible is; device name/description, device type, serial number (for mass storage devices), VendorID, ProductID, and more.

USBDeview allows you to uninstall USB devices that you previously used, and disconnect USB devices currently connected to your computer. Unfortunately it can't figure out which files might have been copied from, or to, your machine, or even if that actually happened. Use your best judgments if you suspect that. Check this out at [tinyurl.com/yhhmy2k](http://tinyurl.com/yhhmy2k). This is a freebie and works on newer Windows systems. The Web site says no need to install it, just run the .exe file. I thought it sounded interesting.

That's it for this month. I'll have some more new product announcements on my Web site that didn't

offer discounts. Meet me here again next month if your editor permits. This column is written to make user group members aware of special offers or freebies I have found or arranged, and my comments should not be interpreted to encourage, or discourage, the purchase of any products, no matter how enthused I might sound.

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## **Useful Computer Acronyms :)**

### **PCMCIA**

People Can't Memorize  
Computer Industry Acronyms

### **ISDN**

It Still Does Nothing

### **APPLE**

Arrogance Produces Profit  
Losing Entity

### **SCSI**

System Can't See It

### **DOS**

Defunct Operating System

### **BASIC**

Bill's Attempt To Seize Industry  
Control

### **IBM**

I Blame Microsoft

### **DEC**

Do Expect Cuts

### **CD-ROM**

Consumer Device Rendered  
Obsolete In Months

### **OS/2**

Obsolete Soon Too

### **WWW**

World Wide Wait

### **MACINTOSH**

Most Applications Crash If Not  
The Operating System Hangs

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Reprinted from the October 2009 issue of *VLUG* of the Valencia Lakes Computer Users Group

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## **Insight : How the World Actually Works! :)**

[www.neopc.org/How.asp](http://www.neopc.org/How.asp)

## Vista Ultimate Raffle!



The QCS is raffling **two** copies of Vista Ultimate that the Microsoft Corporation generously donated to the QCS. Raffle opportunities are :

- \$1— One ticket
- \$5— One arm length of tickets
- \$10—One length of tickets  
finger tip to finger tip

The drawing will be held at the December General Meeting. If you are not present, the winning number will be published in the *QBITS* and posted on the QCS web site and emailed to all members as well. Please bring your winning ticket to the next meeting or your next SIG meeting to claim your prize!

Good luck to the future winner!

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## Balanzza Ergo Digital Luggage

**Scale** (BZZOO), cost \$24.95  
[www.Balanzza.com](http://www.Balanzza.com)



OK, OK, so the Balanzza Digital Luggage Scale isn't one of the usual hardware reviews you'll read in the newsletter, but it's one that will save you money. One of the giveaways at ShowStoppers at CES this past January was Balanzza, a digital luggage scale. ShowStoppers is an after hours, press-only special event where hot companies with cool products meet the press. And this is definitely a cool prod-

uct! We spent time in Europe in August and had stringent airline baggage allowances. British Airways allowed 51 pounds per bag, but Aer Lingus allowed only 44. Our total baggage weight fell within Aer Lingus's allowance, but we knew that with a week in London, we'd never get everything back together in the right bags. Everything we read on Aer Lingus's web site indicated they enforced their rules.

Balanzza to the rescue! Simply hook the sturdy fabric strap around the handle of your suitcase, and then use the device's plastic handle to lift your bag off the ground for a few seconds. After the beep, set the bag down and the digital scale shows the bag's weight in pounds or kilos. If it saves you from a single excess-baggage charge, it has paid for itself.

The scale is a winner for the heavy packer or souvenir collector tired of unhappy surprises at the check-in counter. You won't have to worry going to the airport just how much you've overshot your limit and how lenient the ticket agent will be. Let's face it, the scales in hotels aren't that accurate! Simply bring the scale with you and you won't have to drag your suitcase away from the check in counter to redistribute weight from one bag to the other. How embarrassing! No more overweight luggage charges. You don't even have to translate pounds to kilos on overseas flights.

The Balanzza weighs 1/2 pound, so if you're packing up to the very last ounce, don't forget to allow for this added weight. The scale comes with 2 AAA batteries and is available through the Balanzza web site: [www.Amazon.com](http://www.Amazon.com), [www.ebags.com](http://www.ebags.com), as well as other luggage sites.

Reprinted from the October 2009 issue of *The Computer Booter*, the newsletter of *the Computer Booters* of Sun Lakes

[www.computerbooters.org](http://www.computerbooters.org)

## thousands of free books available online

by Ira Wilsker

WEBSITES:

<http://www.feedbooks.com>

<http://www.flatworldknowledge.com>

[http://www.gutenberg.org/wiki/Main\\_Page](http://www.gutenberg.org/wiki/Main_Page)

<http://www.booksshouldbefree.com>

I enjoy reading. I find that reading is intellectually stimulating, broadens my horizons, and provides vicarious experiences. My daughters grew up in a home full of books where they all became avid readers; this substantially contributed to their academic and professional achievements.

My students at LIT should be reading more, but the cost of books is a deterrent, and a trip to the college or public library is often an inconvenience. Many of today's students have grown up in the era of online information, email, Twitter, Facebook, Yahoo!, and Google and to them "online" is their primary information resource. Now there are internet resources where anyone can read literature of any genre, including hundreds of current textbooks, for free. Depending on the rules of the respective websites, these complete books can be read online in a browser window, or downloaded in a variety of formats, often including the popular and universal PDF format.

The granddaddy of the free online library is the Project Gutenberg at [www.gutenberg.org](http://www.gutenberg.org). According to its website, "Project Gutenberg is the first and largest single collection of free electronic books, or eBooks. Michael Hart, founder of Project Gutenberg, invented eBooks in 1971 and continues to inspire the creation of eBooks and related technologies today." The mission statement of Project Gutenberg is simple but succinct, "To encourage the

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creation and distribution of eBooks." Project Gutenberg has the full-length unabridged copies of over 30,000 titles on its servers, and links to over 100,000 titles located on other services. In addition to the printed word, Project Gutenberg also has hundreds of audio books available for download. About 400 of the audio books have a very realistic computer generated voice that provides the audio, and another 600 are recorded human voices. There are also about 150 recordings of mostly classical music, and a few dozen historically significant recordings from no less than the likes of Thomas Edison. Project Gutenberg has books available in many languages with the largest number being in English, and even some written in Mayan or Yiddish. I know people who download the audio books in MP3 format, burn them to CD, and play them in the car. I know of one individual who has downloaded several of the Edgar Allen Poe audio books, and plays them from an MP3 player as spooky stories for the kids around the campfire.

I teach economics every semester at LIT and try to instill in my students some of the history, culture, and philosophy that created our economic system. While he is briefly recognized in our economics books, Adam Smith is believed by many to be the father of classical economic philosophy. The full unabridged version of his most recognized tome "An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations", better known as the "Wealth of Nations" is on my recommended reading list. In the past the students had to compete for the limited number of copies available in the library or purchase a copy, an often difficult task for a cash strapped college student. Today's college student, or anyone for that matter, can simply go online and read it on his monitor, or download a copy for future reference. This is but one example of how technology can be positively used to expand the

minds of society, and provoke inspired thought and discussion. The book "Wealth of Nations" is but one of many thousands available for free online at Project Gutenberg.

While not as extensive as Project Gutenberg, one of my favorite free eBook websites is Feedbooks at [www.feedbooks.com](http://www.feedbooks.com). Feedbooks are almost all in PDF format, and can be read unabridged online or downloaded for reading at the individual's convenience. Feedbooks has books in four languages, English, French, German, and Spanish, and from hundreds of authors. Feedbooks' selection is exemplary by having what may be the complete works of many authors, including Arthur Conan Doyle, 32 titles; Charles Dickens, 45 titles; Edgar Rice Burroughs, 68 books; Washington Irving; Henry David Thoreau; Jonathan Swift; and hundreds of other authors. Feedbooks is totally searchable, but I enjoy browsing my favorite categories, such as Novels (1382 books), History (111 books), Politics (32 books), Humor (68 books), and Non-Fiction (83 books). There is an extensive "Young Readers" selection composed of over 100 titles that would be good for parents to read to their children, or as a reading experience for the kids themselves. Titles include such classics as Grimm's Fairy Tales, Alice's Adventures in Wonderland, Peter Pan, American Fairy Tales, Fairy Tales of Hans Christian Andersen, Black Beauty, and over a hundred other age appropriate titles.

Many of us are all too aware of the high cost of textbooks. There is currently a move on to publish current textbooks online for free. While this project is in its infancy, there are already many recently published e-textbooks available online at [www.flatworldknowledge.com](http://www.flatworldknowledge.com). It is worth noting that hundreds of college faculty have already adopted these free titles. Students typically have the option of reading

the chapters online for free, or printing individual chapters for a nominal fee (about \$2 per chapter), printing the entire book, or purchasing a bound copy of the book. Faculty may request a free bound copy as well as support materials such as test banks, PowerPoint slides, instructors' manuals, and other supplementary materials, just like the existing commercial textbooks. Even for those who are not currently college students, these online free college textbooks can be a valuable resource for personal and professional enrichment.

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## Windows 7 Party

The Windows 7 Party was attended by 15 QCS members. Although the weather was gloomy, the mood of the event was not. We enjoyed snacks while watching videos showing some of the new features in Windows 7. There was

an opportunity for some hands on time for anyone wanting to try the new operating system.

The url for watching the videos is <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CYNsGTU4P0&feature=fvw>.

You can also find additional videos on the right side of the screen under related videos.

Everyone went home with a small gift and hopefully some information about Windows 7.

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## **How to Be a Geek Goddess**

Reviewed by Sandy Berger,  
CompuKISS

[www.compukiss.com](http://www.compukiss.com)

sandy (at) compukiss.com

This article has been obtained from APCUG with the author's permission for publication by APCUG member groups; all other uses require the permission of the author (see e-mail address above).

I am an old hat when it comes to technology. I was a computer programmer back in the seventies before computers came into the home, and I've kept my hand in the technology arena all these years with my own computer consulting business and my technical writing career. Yet I've never considered myself a "Geek Goddess". As a matter of fact I have often been a little aggravated to hear Kim Komando refer to herself as "The Digital Goddess" - like she is something really special. But Christina Tynan-Wood in her book, *How to Be a Geek Goddess*, isn't advocating that a Geek goddess is someone above everyone else. She says that being a Geek Goddess is "a simple matter of embracing the incredible innovation that's going on in our times and harness it for our own purposes".

Oh yes, and Christina understands the differences between how men and women look at, and deal with, technology. She starts the book off with the sentence, "My husband is a pompous ass." Many of us have

noticed how men seem to pound their chests and promote themselves as the technology heroes of the day. Women, on the other hand, just want to use and enjoy technology. Christina's book is filled with good information about technology with everything from how to choose a computer sales person to hooking up with others online. There are tips on everything from controlling your email to trouble-shooting a wireless connection. Chapters include:

*Getting in Touch with Your Software Side, Where the Stores Never Close, The Wireless Home, Keeping It Safe, Geek Parenting, Groovy Gear and Gadgets, and Your 200 Closest Friends.*

The information in this 315 page book is all accurate and informative. Yet, this is not a reference book. It is rather like a free-flowing novel with technical information. If you want a book where you can look up how to do things, you will have to look elsewhere. This is a book for women who want to absorb some pointers here and there while reading about all the things you can do with your computer. If you are already very familiar with computers, you can skip this book. But again, if you want to immerse yourself in technology and pick up some knowledge and useful tidbits on the way, you will love this book. And you may even become a Geek Goddess yourself!

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## **Computer & Internet Tips and Tricks**

Written by Gregory West, Editor,  
Sarnia Computer Users' Group,  
Canada

From the SCUG Report, February 2009 Issue

[www.scug.ca](http://www.scug.ca)

editor (at) scug.ca

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As Editor for the Sarnia Computer Users. Group, I do a lot of online research for interesting websites and also free software. I am also fortunate to have people who send me their online gems. Here I share some of these amazing finds with you.

Remember: The programs you are about to see are FREE and legal and for you to download and use. Try out programs, or simply take a sneak peek at what they can do for you; the choice is yours. So, happy clicking and email me with what you think about these programs: [editor@scug.ca](mailto:editor@scug.ca)

### **Gimme Back Those Deleted or Lost Files - File Recovery Program**

Website: [www.recuva.com](http://www.recuva.com)

Runs on Microsoft Windows 98, 2000, 2003, XP and Vista

We have all done it. You have too, come on, admit it. Yes when you accidentally delete a file from your computer, the Recycle Bin, digital camera memory card, USB stick, or even songs from your MP3 player, this program will help you to recover those lost files. It is a good program to have on your computer for those times when you least expect it and you DELETE in error.

### **ATTENTION ALL eBay USERS – A Must Have eBay Desktop**

Website: <http://desktop.ebay.com>  
Runs on Windows XP/Vista or MacOS X 10.4/10.5

This desktop application puts you in total control of your eBay bargaining with an eagleeye live gatekeeper of your bid or bidders. Never miss an eBay bargain again. This is WEB 3.0 at its best. "eBay's slick new app does more than simply recreate the auction site on the desktop -- it makes the whole experience thoroughly interactive and much more engaging" ([wired.com](http://wired.com)).

### **Catch Thieves in the Act, Live and Recorded Video Security**

## System Using Your Webcam

Website: [www.yawcam.com](http://www.yawcam.com)

Works on Windows 2000/XP/Vista

This security webcam software for windows is simple and easy to use and includes most of the usual security camera features such as: Video streaming, Image snapshots, motion detection, and Online Web Forum for help.

The software program is very easy to work with and after a short time you can set your webcam to catch a thief stealing your stuff. The video or pictures are sent immediately to the Internet (where you designate for safe keeping). The program senses motion in a room. You can have the program set so that it will record a video of the thief in action, or email you a photo, or upload (FTP) the live video to a website.

Real nice to be able to hand over a full video of the thieves in your house. If you are away, say in Florida, you can easily email the Police the video or photo of the live crime scene with full video and photos of the bad guys.

## Windows Live Family Safety

Website Download: [get.live.com](http://get.live.com)

Website Information:

<http://tinyurl.com/24k8fo>

We are all worried about young children using the Internet these days. This program puts you in control of your computer and Internet browsing experience. You are in charge of your children's online Internet surfing habits. You can also monitor Windows Live Messenger contacts and block who they talk to online. As well, you can also block Internet websites too. This is a must have for any family with a computer connected to the Internet.

NOTE: "Windows Live Family Safety is a Web service that's free to people who use Microsoft Windows XP. If you use Windows Vista—the operating system installed on many new computers—you can use the built-in family safety tools." (Microsoft.com)

## Officers 2009-2010

### Elected Officers

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Special Events Director..	Open		
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### Other

Resource Center Mgr.....	Judi McDowell.....	(309) 314-1780	<a href="mailto:jmcdowell@mchsi.com">jmcdowell@mchsi.com</a>
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## Connect to your Home Computer While Away with Logmein

Website: [www.logmein.com](http://www.logmein.com)

While away from home, wouldn't it be nice to access files and programs from your home computer. Now you can. You can easily connect to your PC with a software program called logmein. This program is also used by large corporations to connect to offsite PCs. This program will also allow a friend to fix your computer even though they are thousands of miles from your PC. It is easy to set up and easy to operate. Give it a test drive...You will love it.

NOTE: This article first appeared in First Monday magazine, Sarnia, Ontario Canada. A Huron Printing Publication [www.huronweb.net/first\\_monday.php](http://www.huronweb.net/first_monday.php)

## Access Point, Wireless Keyboard and Mouse Donated to QCS

The Quad-Cities Computer Society wishes to thank Dale Wells of Computer Repair Center for donating an access point, a wireless keyboard and mouse.

### Computer Repair Center

872 Middle Road  
Bettendorf IA 52722  
PH: 563-359-0042  
Fax: 563-359-3411

[www.computer-repair-center.com](http://www.computer-repair-center.com)  
[dale@computer-repair-center.com](mailto:dale@computer-repair-center.com)

## QCS Meeting Dates

Sun	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Fri	Sat
1 Nov	2 Nov 7:00 PM Microsoft Office SIG Judi McDowell 309-314-1780 jmcdowell@mchsi.com	3 Nov  <b>November 2009</b>	4 Nov 6:30 PM QCS Board Meeting Judi McDowell 309-314-1780 jmcdowell@mchsi.com	5 Nov	6 Nov	7 Nov
8 Nov	9 Nov 7:00 PM Internet SIG Ted Huberts 309-792-9470 slowhand54@sbcglobal.net	10 Nov	11 Nov 5:45 PM Beginners SIG 7:00 PM <b>Best Buy Holiday Gifts</b>	12 Nov	13 Nov	14 Nov
15 Nov	16 Nov 7:00 PM Genealogy SIG Len Stevens 563-359-9672 judylenstevens@msn.com	17 Nov	18 Nov 7:00 PM Digital Media SIG N. Budelier 309-787-2239 vwazz@hotmail.com	19 Nov	20 Nov	21 Nov
22 Nov	23 Nov 7:00 PM Windows SIG Larry Stone 309 787-5574 lstone521@mchsi.com	24 Nov	25 Nov	26 Nov 	27 Nov	28 Nov
29 Nov	30 Nov	1 Dec	2 Dec 6:30 PM QCS Board Meeting Judi McDowell 309-314-1780 jmcdowell@mchsi.com	3 Dec	4 Dec	5 Dec
6 Dec	7 Dec 7:00 PM Microsoft Office SIG Judi McDowell 309-314-1780 jmcdowell@mchsi.com	8 Dec  <b>December 2009</b>	9 Dec	10 Dec	11 Dec	12 Dec

**\*Beginner's SIG meets at Tri-City  
Jewish Center  
before the QCS program  
Jim Kristan  
309-755-8277  
jmkris@gmail.com**

**ALL QCS MEETINGS NOW HELD AT  
TRI-CITY JEWISH CENTER  
2715 30TH  
ROCK ISLAND, IL 61201  
ALWAYS CALL AS INDICATED ON THE  
CALENDAR  
TO VERIFY MEETING TIME, LOCATION, AND  
TOPIC INFORMATION  
ALL QCS MEETING FACILITIES ARE  
HANDICAPPED ACCESSIBLE.**

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<b>Membership Level</b>	
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Individual            \$30	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Family                 \$40	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>

**QCS Main Meeting**  
  
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November 11, 2009  
7:00 PM  
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