



Official Newsletter  
SouthEastern Michigan  
Computer Organization, Inc.

# DATA BUS

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## **Hundreds of Free Online “Talks” from TED By Ira Wilsker**

Sometimes we all need a little intellectual stimulation. I recently learned of a non-profit international organization that has posted nearly a thousand “talks” presented by hundreds of the top thinkers in the world. The talks are not all from eggheads and nerds, but from a diverse list of people prominent in the fields of technology, entertainment, and design, hence the acronym for the organization compiling these talks, “TED.”

TED was formed in 1984 as a small organization “... devoted to Ideas Worth Spreading.” In the 27 years since its founding, TED has hosted numerous conferences in California, the UK, India, and many other localities around the world where notable speakers delivered talks on a variety of contemporary subjects. It is these talks that were video recorded, and are now freely available at <http://www.ted.com/talks>. Topics are as varied as the speakers, and cover politics, music, art, contemporary issues, history, medicine, business, and a variety of other subjects. Most of the talks available online are relatively short, 18 minutes or less, with many being as short as three minutes, and all are generally very stimulating in terms of their content and presentation.

Among the most recent additions to the talks online are: “Bill Gates: How state budgets are breaking US schools”; “Wael Ghonim (the controversial Google executive who spearheaded the revolution in Egypt): Inside the Egyptian revolution”; “Danny Hillis: Understanding cancer through

proteomics”; “Elizabeth Lindsey (National Geographic): Curating humanity’s heritage”; “Madeleine Albright (former Secretary of State): On being a woman and a diplomat”; “Cynthia Breazeal: The rise of personal robots”; “Thomas Goetz: It’s time to redesign medical data”; “Martin Jacques: Understanding the rise of China”; “Deborah Rhodes (Mayo Clinic): A tool that finds 3x more breast tumors, and why it’s not available to you”; and many others that most people may find very interesting.

The TED Talks page can be interactively sorted by topic, or by an unusual rating system based on the reviews of the talk, including, “jaw-dropping, persuasive, courageous, ingenious, fascinating, inspiring, beautiful, funny, or informative”. Being somewhat of a fan of good comedy, I clicked on the “funny” category, and was presented with a listing of 81 talks where comedy and humor were used either as the primary subject, or as a way to get an intellectual point across to the audience.

In the entertainment category are 181 talks that cover music, comedy, theatre, television, and media related technology. In my first few minutes of browsing the entertainment category, I found three talks which were especially gratifying. The first was titled, “Ahn Trio: A modern take on piano, violin, cello” where cellist Maria, pianist Lucia, violinist Angella interpreted classical chamber music in a contemporary way such that it was very entertaining and enlightening. Second was “Heather Knight: Silicon-based comedy” where she used a robot aptly named “Data” as a comedian; Data was no ordinary robot spitting out classical one-liners,

but an intelligent robot using a complex program to autonomously respond to the audience. In the talk, “Hillel Cooperman: Legos for grownups,” the classical building blocks are utilized to create spectacular projects designed with computers, CAD, and other forms of technology.

Being a grandparent, I was especially intrigued with the talk by Patricia Kuhl, where she spoke on “The linguistic genius of babies.” In her talk she presents her findings about how babies learn language by “...listening to the humans around them and “taking statistics” on the sounds they need to know.” Using lab experiments and brain scans, Patricia Kuhl shows “how 6-month-old babies use sophisticated reasoning to understand their world.” In her talk she demonstrates how babies and small children can easily learn a language through immersion, and why older kids and adults often find it difficult to learn a new language.

In “James Watson on how he discovered DNA,” the Nobel Prize winner tells the funny story about how he and his partner, Francis Crick discovered the structure of DNA. This fascinating short talk was inspirational and demonstrated that some of the brightest nerds in the world are also quite human, and have distinctly human traits just like the rest of us.

TED is a non-profit headquartered in New York City, and has a who’s who list of corporate sponsors including AOL, AT&T, Autodesk, BlackBerry, Cisco, Coca-Cola, GE, Goldman Sachs, IBM, Johnson & Johnson, and others. According to its website, <<http://www.ted.com/pages/about>>, the mission of TED is simple and brief, and that is “Spreading ideas.” The TED website

says, “We believe passionately in the power of ideas to change attitudes, lives and ultimately, the world. So we’re building here a clearinghouse that offers free knowledge and inspiration from the world’s most inspired thinkers, and also a community of curious souls to engage with ideas and each other.” TED accomplishes these goals by sponsoring local, national, and international meetings where the sole function is spreading ideas through a series of short talks presented by individuals with a proven track record from the fields of technology, entertainment and design.

For anyone who may need inspiration, intellectual stimulation, or who may need to be entertained by a series of short talks by knowledgeable people, the website at TED.com would be a good place to visit.

#### **WEBSITES:**

<<http://www.ted.com>>.

<<http://www.ted.com/talks>>.

<<http://www.ted.com/pages/about>>.

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## **Tor, Anonymity On-line**

### **By Dick Maybach**

Tor protects your privacy when you are on-line in two ways: (1) it prevents other users of the network you use to reach the Internet (for example a public Wi-Fi hotspot) from seeing the data you exchange and with whom you communicate and (2) it hides your identity from those with whom you communicate. For most of us, item (1) is more important. For example, when we use a Wi-Fi hotspot to access the Internet, every byte we send and every one we receive is accessible to all its other users. One defense would be to add a separate defensive tool for every offensive one, which is the approach taken to foil Windows viruses. The result will surely be the same – an ever-increasing kit of defensive programs to counter the never-ending supply of offensive programs. A much sounder approach is to run Tor, which defends against all such attacks; as a result you need install only one tool. Item (2) is probably less important to you; it prevents sites you visit from knowing who you are or what other sites you've visited. We are seeing ever more intrusions into our privacy by governments and businesses, and Tor was developed to help us preserve our privacy, safety, and dignity in the face of this. Although Tor is legal in all countries, you can do illegal things using it. In this way, it's similar to the gas pedal on your car, which is essential if you want to go someplace, but must be used with restraint to avoid awkward and expensive discussions with the law.

Tor hides not only what you say, but also who you say it to. You could use it to communicate back home from a location where disclosing your country of origin or religion might expose you to unpleasantness or risk. This feature also allows you to circumvent restrictions that your ISP has placed on the Web sites you visit. It's used by individuals, businesses, activists, reporters, the military, and law enforcement for investigations and to protect themselves, their organizations, and those with whom they communicate. Using it, you can surf the Web, exchange e-mail, use instant messaging, and transfer files. However, please don't just install it and assume you're safe. You need to change some of your habits, and reconfigure your software. Tor by itself is NOT all you need to maintain your anonymity.

Tor consists of two parts – a public, secure virtual private network (VPN) and the software to access it. The software is free and available for Windows, Mac OS X, Linux, and some smart phones at <<http://www.torproject.org/>>. Most PC and Mac users will want the Tor Browser Bundle, which includes the Firefox browser. (For reasons you can read on the Tor Web site, neither Internet Explorer nor Safari is suitable for secure browsing.) The Tor VPN is distributed and accessible worldwide, is free, and is provided and maintained by volunteers. Because the network consists of thousands of independent Web sites, it's quite robust; there is no single point of failure.

How does Tor work? When you access the Internet with it, you first communicate with a Tor Directory Server over an encrypted link (one with a URL beginning https://). Here, you obtain a list of available Tor Nodes. The

Tor software on your computer selects at least three of these; call them Node 1, Node 2, and Node 3. It then sets up a secure link to Node 1, which forwards your traffic to Node 2, which forwards it to Node 3. All these links are secure, and only Node 3 can decrypt your packets. Finally Node 3 sends your packets to your desired end site. Note that if the end site is secure (indicated by a URL beginning with <https://>), even Node 3 can't read your data. Packets coming to you follow the reverse path, Node 3 encrypts them in such a way that only you can do the decryption. As far as the end site knows, it is communicating with Node 3; it has no way of finding your computer's URL. An observer on your local network knows only the URL of the Tor Directory Server and Node 1; he can't find the location of the end site or read any of your packets. Only Node 1 knows your location, and only Node 3 knows that of the end site. Note that Node 3 can also see the data you exchange, unless you're using end-to-end encryption, i.e., talking to a site with a URL beginning <https://>.

When you install Tor, you will also install the Torbutton add-on for Firefox, which allows you to turn Tor anonymous browsing on and off. Turning Tor on changes some of Firefox's operation.

\* None of the cookies you acquired during normal browsing will be available. This is because cookies can tell the site you are communicating with a lot about you and which sites you've visited. As a result, you will have to reenter passwords where they are required. These cookies will return when you toggle Tor off.

\* Some sites will be displayed in a foreign language. Since they don't know where you are, they assume you

are located in the same country as Node 3. See the Tor site for work-arounds.

\* You will see moderate delays while surfing the Web. There are at least three intermediate sites on the path to your final destination, and several layers of encryption are involved. While the delays are noticeable, I haven't found them to be obnoxious, and I consider it a good trade-off to achieve better security.

Many users need only browser access to the Internet when away from home, since through it they can also exchange e-mail and transfer files. (I've found that the FireFTP add-on is convenient for the latter, but see the Tor site for instructions on how to configure it and follow these exactly.) If you want to use secure instant messaging, use Pidgin, which Windows and OS X users can obtain by installing the Tor IM Bundle, available on the Web site. (Pidgin is in most Linux repositories.) You can't use Tor for file sharing, i.e., using BitTorrent; instead use the I2P network, <<http://www.i2p2.de/>>. See the Tor site for how to configure other Internet access programs, including some that provide access to your home computer. However, if you really need access to files on your home computer, it would be better to transfer them to your laptop or to a cloud service before you go. Otherwise, a power transient or other failure could disable your computer until you return home to restore it.

Accessing the Internet away from home without Tor is like driving without insurance, you can almost always get away with it. That doesn't mean it's a smart thing to do.

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## **What a Nasty Virus Can Do to Your Computer**

**By Merle Nicholson**

I recently was asked to remove a virus from a friend/client's notebook. For all intents and purposes, it rendered the computer completely in-operative. The virus was in a virus category of "Rogue antivirus software." There are many of them out there for the unwary to catch, and this one, called "ThinkPoint," even has the Windows flag on it to further fool you into thinking it is legitimate. The only option you can see is "Safe Startup," and that takes you to a virus scanner and a way to purchase the product. If you close it out, it shows you a blank desktop, no icons, no menus. You can turn the machine off, that's about it. Turn it back on, same situation. I did figure out a way to kill it through the Task Manager's Run command, and then run the desktop. I also found some things written up on the Internet to do something similar, but no help in removing it. I did remove it using some very clever, obscure skills, several virus scanners, then finding and removing twenty or so copies of it. But the computer really didn't work well enough to use. What I found surprised me, and this is what the article is about and what you can do.

Here's a list of what I found. Some things are by deduction and may not be 100% accurate, but I am 100% certain that these problems existed. All of the things fit into a strategy that prevents you from fixing the computer.

1. The worst thing: The computer will not boot into safe mode. It blue screens every time. I'm speculating that ThinkPoint either corrupted an existing

driver or put a new one in that loads and then fails. The way to fix this is to do a system repair or a complete reformat and installation. I did not want to impose that cost on my customer, and she agreed (it's not a primary computer, and it's rather old). So I left it that way.

2. All the system restore points were unusable. Refused to restore to any point.

3. To run most anything, an official-looking popup would ask to confirm the logon user and give a box for an alternative user account that did not work. This is to make sure that everything you try is run under the current user account which has been modified to prevent circumventing the virus. What you want to run is Explorer.exe giving you your desktop, and every effort is made to prevent you from doing this.

4. Most – perhaps all – items in Control Panel will not run. It gave a warning that the administrator account has restricted its use. I did manage to get into the power configuration, but it would not accept any change. The computer would go into sleep mode after about 20 minutes, keeping me from running a full system scan from any antivirus software unless I sat there and wiggled the mouse occasionally for four hours.

5. The Internet articles say that even if you purchase the software to fix a bogus virus, ThinkPoint stays on the computer. The uninstall just errors out.

6. The Internet articles say that it installs other viruses, and I did find a half dozen other viruses, mostly downloaders.

7. It leaves about 20 copies of itself under various random names, and places items in the registry to run each



of them. So removing the active virus is just the beginning. I also found a couple of viruses in the System Restore files.

8. It apparently makes changes to the current user account profile that look like group policy changes, even though this was Windows XP Home, which doesn't have group policy capability.

9. Only after all the bad software is cleared from the machine can you then get rid of the modified account by creating a new administrative account, copying all of the user files from the old to the new – except for the profile files, then deleting the old account after locating the e-mail files.

Isn't this scary? It is to me, and I (95%) fixed this one with a lot of work. The idea of having to fix my own machine after something like this gives me nightmares.

What you can do to prevent this: A sizable number of virus infections now are rogue anti-virus'. There's an understandable reason for this. It creates revenue. Old-fashioned viruses are malicious, but have no revenue-producing strategy. In other words, it's now about money. Most all viruses are sent to you via web pages, and most of those are porn sites, either designed that way or hacked from outside. Porn sites are visited so often, they are a very good candidate for this kind of thing. Also, presumably the porn site owners don't have the skill to remove sophisticated hacks. But most any web site is vulnerable. In any case, you must select something on the site – click on it – to give the browser a chance to violate security rules.

The next common way to get a virus is with downloads. And that means just about any download or file transfer. So you have to get any and all files from

reputable sites like iTunes or <<http://Download.com>>, Amazon etc., which have the resources to check their own content.

But that leaves any and all file-sharing sites absolutely and definitely off the list. So if you're downloading songs for free, you're in trouble. Any file-sharing site's software must be uninstalled from your computer.

And that also goes for any peer-to-peer gaming sites, LimeWire, Kazaa, and any and all IM programs that allow peer-to-peer file exchanges.

And while we're at it, remove – uninstall – anything that says "Toolbar." Right now. Want to know why toolbars are free? Because they're a conduit for pushing advertising to you; and they're easily exploited. Besides you don't need them. They want you to believe you do, of course! But the browser itself and a couple of favorites will do anything a toolbar will do.

An alternative is giving up gaming and IM and to start purchasing songs. So if you have kids who will just die without peer-to-peer gaming or IM and stealing songs, the answer is to live with it with some intelligent prevention.

First, if at all possible, put the kids (and maybe grandpa) on a Windows 7 machine. If you have some internal networking and file sharing, Windows 7 Pro is better because it will back up to a network drive. But so will Acronis Home, or 2010 or 2011, running under Win 7 Home Premium.

Make sure you have a full system backup, and replace it monthly. Use Windows 7 Backup or Acronis. Believe me, restoring the entire system hard drive is way, way better than any alternative that I can think of. Look at



what I had to do with ThinkPoint. Want to try it?

I guess it's obvious, but a strong anti-virus program running on your machine is essential. BUT – this is important – make sure you look at the scheduling part of it and make sure it will automatically download new definitions and also run a full system scan at a time of day that the machine will most likely be turned on. Same for Windows Updates. Make certain that all important updates are installed as soon as they are available.

Password protect your main administrative account (this is the one that comes first with the computer) and bury the password paper in the back yard and leave the location with your attorney. Better yet, Win 7 allows you to create a flash drive that will unlock the computer. Hide it under some rubber fake dog poop someplace.

THEN: Create a non-administrative account for yourself – a regular non-privileged account, and a separate one – or one for each kid. A regular account cannot install software. But most importantly, SOFTWARE that is run under this account can't install software. Ah HA!

Then one more step. Set the screensavers to require a sign-in on wake-up, and ALWAYS log off when you leave the computer. That's especially essential when leaving the administrative account.

Skills: There are a few things that would be very helpful to learn. The big one is navigating the computer file system using Windows Explorer. Find out how your files are organized, and more importantly, how to change what files you can view. That's in Windows Explorer, Tools, Folder Options, View

tab. Second Important Skill – learn to use the Add, Remove Programs. That's "Programs and Features" in Vista and Win 7. When you find an installed program that you are not using (say, anything with the word Apple or toolbar), just uninstall it, and see how it goes.

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**Word Templates Can  
Simplify Your Life  
By Nancy DeMarte**

Templates have been a feature of Microsoft Word since the early versions. These pre-formatted documents are offered as time-savers to users who need a quick business letter, resume, agenda, or other document. Each template includes placeholders with instructions for what should be typed there, such as "recipient name." The user fills in the required information and the document is complete.

I was never a fan of templates. They were too restrictive; I am the do-it-myself type. There was never the right kind of document for my task among the limited choices. And if I could remember to save the template as a document, I was never exactly sure where it was being saved on my computer. With the greatly enhanced improvements to templates in Word 2007 and 2010, I have changed my mind. The template choices now have been expanded to include hundreds of document types, and they are much easier to find and save. Word 2007/2010

users can even edit templates or create their own templates from personal documents.

### **Using a Template**

Word 2007 provides templates from two sources: installed within the Word program and online at the Microsoft website. To view the installed templates, click the Office button (or File button in Word 2010), then New, and then Installed Templates. Here you will find thirty letters, fax cover pages, resumes, and agendas formatted with the new themes of Word 2007. Click one to see its preview, and then click “Create new,” which opens it as a document, leaving the original template intact in its original location. After replacing the placeholder text with your own, save this document to a folder of your choice. Often the placeholder body text includes tips for changing the formatting using the new style and theme galleries in Word 2007.

The online templates offer an impressive number and variety of document types. Accessing these couldn’t be simpler. Click the Office button, then New. Under the heading Microsoft Office Online in the left column, select the category of template you want. Besides the standard letters and resumes, you will find interesting new categories such as calendars, greeting cards, and stationery, which are colorful and professionally formatted. To use the category “Lists” as an example, under the subheading Home are various shopping lists, emergency contacts list, and a travel checklist, to name a few. Other types of lists include Medical (family medical history, medicines and vitamins, etc.) and Menus (illustrated templates for menus to celebrate all kinds of occasions). Merely reading

through the forty categories of online templates should inspire anyone to try some.

Once you have chosen a specific template from the online selections, click it to see the preview. Some of these templates have been created by Microsoft; others have been submitted by users. In the preview window you will see the template’s rating (1 – 5 stars) based on user feedback, the file size and estimated download time. If it is a user-created template, it will include license agreement and terms of use links, although these templates have been thoroughly screened. To get an online template, click Download. Almost immediately the template will appear on your screen as a document, with the template stored in My Templates (Office button – New – My Templates) for future use.

An interesting feature of online templates is that many of them contain usable content rather than just formatting suggestions. For example, under the Letters category, the “Apology for Poor Service” letter is an actual apology which could be sent by a business in response to a complaint from a customer. Another letter from the travel letters subheading is “Complaint about Lost Luggage.” For those of us who want to write this letter, but aren’t sure how to word it, this template could save the day.

### **Customizing a Template**

Of course, anything in a template can be modified, even the template itself. To edit an installed template, bring it up in the preview window. Next to “Create new,” select Template instead of Document so that it opens as a template. To edit an online template, download it first, and then save it as a template

file type (.dotx). Now you can delete placeholders and replace them with text that will not change, such as your name and address. You can change the font or font size or any other formatting aspect of the template. When done, save it as a template file type with a name that clearly identifies it, such as “Median letter template revised” and be sure it gets stored with other templates in the My Templates folder. In the “Save As” dialog box, choose “Templates” as the saving location. You can always delete templates from the My Templates folder the same way you delete any file.

### **Create a Template with the Hidden Tab**

I have often wished I could create a template from a document that I use regularly. It’s easy with Word 2007. To do this, you will need to reveal a hidden tab on the Ribbon: the Developer tab. Click the Office button, then Word Options. Put a check mark next to “Show Developer tab in the ribbon” and click OK.

First open or create a document that you wish to be the basis for a template. For illustration, let’s say it is a meeting agenda. Decide which areas of the template will change in subsequent uses, such as the date or agenda items. In the Developer tab, you can add a Date Picker from the Controls group. It’s the second icon in the bottom row. This will add a drop down calendar to the template from which to choose a date and gives options for formatting the date. To add a placeholder for a text item, the Controls group includes a Rich Text command (Aa) which will add a placeholder. You can then use the Properties command to add text which describes what should be typed there, such as “Agenda Item 1.” Save your creation as a template (.dotx

or .dot) in My Templates as described above. It will be readily available when you need it.

Templates can help us do a variety of tasks with Word without the tedium of creating all our documents from scratch. Explore the template choices, and you will surely find some that meet your needs.

*Nancy DeMarte is a columnist for the newsletter of Sarasota PCUG, Inc. This article appeared in the January 2011 issue of the “Sarasota PC Monitor.” Internet: <<http://www.spcug.org>>. E-mail: <[ndemarte \(at\) Verizon.net](mailto:ndemarte@verizon.net)>.*

**Drop it in the Box: Dropbox,  
What it is, How it Works  
By Jo Grazide**

### **What is Dropbox?**

Suppose you were able to save work without using a flash drive, a disk (CD or DVD-R or RW), or an external drive, or even e-mail, and move files between your laptop and desktop? For many years, I, like so many of us, had developed methods and procedures to upload, download, and save documents, music and pictures to a storage device, only to have to rely on memory to locate it afterwards. Another irritating problem for me, especially when I was working, was to identify the “latest” version, so that an older file would not overwrite my work during a “Save As.”

Enter Dropbox, a useful application that eliminates lots of work and uncertainty.

Dropbox is a free download that offers protection and convenience and is easy to use. There is basically no learning involved. You should, however, be familiar with Drag & Drop and Move

vs. Copy. Why not give Dropbox a try and see whether this is for you.

I first heard of Dropbox during a meeting of my camera club. Some members seemed happy with it; there were no negative comments, leading me to investigate. Having a way to store photography files without worrying about loss or corruption seemed an ideal solution to the problem of travel pictures. I got to test this, when I maxed out the Dropbox folder at around 2 GB during a vacation in Boston. There are two ways to increase your storage capacity – you can purchase the program on a monthly or yearly basis, or you can have friends join the service and be rewarded a few more MB's up to a whopping 8 GB.

### **Get the App**

To acquire Dropbox, you need to go to the website at [www.dropbox.com](http://www.dropbox.com). The download is quick and easy. Just run it, and follow the instructions. There are six initial steps:

1. Take the tour
2. Install Dropbox
3. Put files in your Dropbox folder
4. Install Dropbox on other computers
5. Share a folder with friends or colleagues
6. Invite friends to join

It is necessary to install the program on all computers that you will be using. The setup is done on the website, and the instructions are easy.

In my case, this is my laptop and my desktop. As I move around with the laptop, to meetings or anywhere I use it, I'm able to save files as they are created, directly into the Dropbox folder, which sits in the system tray area. By clicking on its icon, Dropbox will provide easy and helpful commands.

In addition, I know that once I reach home, altered files will be available and updated on my desktop machine. They can be dragged into their proper locations on the storage drives. This has been extremely useful. Instead of dealing with two documents, a newer version and an older version, there is only one synchronized version.

Another nice aspect is that I don't have to worry about misplacing storage disks or flash drives, which does happen. I also would think that it lessens stress, as there is nothing to lose!

### **On the Website**

There is plenty of information on the Dropbox website. There are videos and explanations of the synching process. Basically, anything that is put into the local folder is also recorded on the Internet. You can also access your files and upload them directly onto the Dropbox server.

It can be compared to using GoogleDocs or Windows Live Mesh. Collaboration, by the way, is possible. I haven't delved into this, because I simply need a way to move data between computers. If you want to learn more, you need to visit the Dropbox website and study this feature.

The Dropbox website has five tabs:  
\* "Get Started" walks you through several chores before you can earn some extra space. This is simple and easy to understand.

\* "Files" is the online list of your current Dropbox inhabitants, their sizes and the dates they were modified. You can sort each column by clicking on its heading. There are buttons here that let you do even more. A basic knowledge of file management is all you need to comprehend this part of the application.

\* “Events” is a listing of various edits, deletions, and other information about your files.

\* “Sharing” allows you to create a new folder to share, or share an existing folder. By following the prompts, you can identify who you want to share the folder with. In my case, I began typing my husband’s e-mail address, and it was prefilled for me. This would make it easier for multiple shares in a business or committee setting. Perhaps our next Board meeting minutes will appear in a Dropbox folder! I also found that once the shared folder appeared in my local Dropbox folder, I could rename it and manage it locally. A refresh caused the change to appear on the website immediately. I like this type of efficiency. There is no lag time, and information can be relayed quickly between computers.

\* Finally, “Help” is all the rest. It seems that the Dropbox website is complete; you can spend much time learning about it. I would suggest that you jump in and try out the program; you can learn by doing as well.

There are a couple of things I would warn you about as a new user. If you simply drag and drop the file back and forth, it copies the file. You may want to right-drag and choose move to ensure you have the latest version of your work or photograph. Also, having a comfort level with storage online to some extent, and not adding things like your Social Security number or banking information, goes without saying. Aside from that, there are no problems I can see with using this reliably.

### One Last Thing

I do have one favor to ask you if you do join Dropbox; please use the link! It will enable both of us to get some

extra space, a great reward and well deserved! The link to join on my behalf is <<http://db.tt/sHvgWQp>>. I promise I will not waste that space!!!!!!

### System Requirements

Hardware: At least 512MB of RAM; free space on your computer equal to your Dropbox storage quota.

#### Software:

- Windows: Windows 2003, Windows XP, Windows Vista, and Windows 7 (32 and 64-bit).
- Mac OS X: Tiger (10.4) or later.
- Linux: Ubuntu 7.10+ and Fedora Core 9+.
- Also iPhone iOS 3.1, Android 1.5 and Blackberry 4.5.

Pricing: Up to 2 gigabytes of free storage space; DropBox 50, up to 50GB storage for \$9.99/month or \$99/year; Dropbox 100, up to 100GB storage for 19.95/month or \$199/year.

For more information: <<https://www.dropbox.com/plansproducts/desktop>>.

*[Editor's Note: One feature that was not mentioned in this report is the use of the “public” directory to post items that anyone can download. In the case of the public directory, the recipient does not have to have Dropbox installed. He/she just needs general access to the Internet]*

*Jo Grazide is Leader, Word Processing Workshop, Brookdale Computer Users Group, New Jersey. This article appeared in the February 2011 Issue of “Bug Bytes.” Web: <<http://bcug.com>>. E-mail: <[gjo520\(at\)gmail.com](mailto:gjo520(at)gmail.com)>.*



**Your Computer's Health—  
The “Oh Oh” Moment  
By Art Greshan**

Oops. Darn, What The...? You know the feeling. Yesterday everything was fine. Today you are wondering what happened overnight. What can you do if your computer seems to have suddenly gotten sick? Perhaps it was caused by that neat new application, or game, you installed yesterday, or maybe something got installed when you visited that website that promised to speed your computer's Internet access, but when the page opened it ran a moment and then seemed to hang up with no sense that it really did what was expected. Maybe you should not have installed that app/game/utility because it was some kind of rogue or worthless program, or worse, and you are now stuck with a sick system.

Don't you wish you could go back in time to last weekend when everything seemed to be running fine? Well, you can. Probably.

If you are running a Microsoft Windows ME, XP, Vista or 7 then the System Restore is available to offer you protection for many of these kinds of illness, and might be worth checking to see if you can regain your computer's health.

System Restore allows you to roll back most system files, registry keys, and installed programs, the DLL Cache folder, local user profiles, and more. When installed, and not disabled (more about that later) you may manually create a restore point, or use one of the automatically created points. And it does this without affecting your personal files, or data such as e-mail,

documents, or photos. We will discuss full backups that include your data in a future article.

Also note that in Vista and later versions it has been improved and now uses “Shadow Copy” Technology with even more backup capabilities.

So where do you look to see if you have any restore points? You should do this today to be sure it is not disabled. Open System Restore by clicking the Start button, clicking All Programs, clicking Accessories, clicking System Tools, and then clicking System Restore. Be sure to select “Restore my computer to an earlier time,” then click Next.

You will see a calendar of the current month, and several of the dates should be marked in Bold. These dates have restore points available, and some may have more than one as shown below. You may have multiple restore points for several reasons.

Wikipedia lists the Restore points that are created:

- When software is installed using the Windows Installer, Package Installer or other installers which are aware of System Restore.[note]
- When Windows Update installs new updates to Windows.
- When the user installs a driver that is not digitally signed by Windows Hardware Quality Labs.
- Every 24 hours of computer use (10 hours in Windows Me), or every 24 hours of calendar time, whichever happens first. This setting is configurable through the registry or using the deployment tools. Such a restore point is known as a system checkpoint. System Restore requires Task Scheduler to create system checkpoints. Moreover, system checkpoints are only created if



the system is idle for a certain amount of time.

- When the operating system starts after being off for more than 24 hours.
- When the user requests it. On Windows Vista, shadow copies created during File Backup and Complete PC Backup can also be used as restore points. Older restore points are deleted as per the configured space constraint on a First In, First Out basis. [Wikipedia] To begin a restore simply click on the date you want, and then click Next a couple times. Your system will restart and hopefully you have healed the patient.

If you do not see any restore points, you might want to check that the process is not disabled. To do this in XP you can right click My Computer, open the Properties, and click on the System Restore Tab. There you will see a checkbox where you can “Turn off System Restore on all drives. Be sure that is un-checked. For Win 7 see the FAQ How do I turn System Restore on or off?

#### References:

<[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/System\\_Restore](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/System_Restore)>.

<<http://windows.microsoft.com/en-US/windows-vista/What-is-System-Restore>>.

<<http://windows.microsoft.com/en-US/windows-vista/What-types-of-files-does-System-Restore-change>>.

*Art Gresham is a member of the Under the Computer Hood User Group of San Diego California. He is editor of the “UCHUG Drive Light.” This article appeared in the February 2011 issue. Web: <<http://www.uchug.org>>. E-mail: <[1editor101\(at\)uchug.org](mailto:1editor101(at)uchug.org)>*



#### 35th Anniversary Meeting in April By Warner Mach

The April 10 meeting will be the 35th anniversary of SEMCO. We will have cake! We will have valuable door prizes! You can dust off some of that old gear and bring it in.

Our featured speaker will be Jim Rarus, senior patriarch of all things SEMCO. Additionally, we will have a multi-segment talk titled, “The Future is Now!”

The face of computing is a science-fiction development of what we started with in 1976. Some things were predictable and some things—like the Internet—were not.

In 1976 the concerns centered on Microsoft BASIC, the KIM-1, the Intel 8080, the Motorola 6800, and MOS Technology 6502 chip sets. The Apple 1 computer will soon appear. Programs were stored on cassette tape.

Now, in 2011, the Internet and social media dominate everything. Digital photos and videos are everywhere. You can buy computer media at the drugstore. Very realistic networked games (some in 3-D) exist. The IBM computer ‘Watson’ beat top competitors at Jeopardy.

There have also been some missteps along the way, like the “dot com” bust.

How did we go from 1976 to 2011? What has been gained and what has been lost?



## *SEMCO Meeting Pictures*



(Above): Greg Zonca, of Mort Crim Communications, talks about the basics of Video Editing. (Below) Tom Callow gives the news, moderates Q&A, and discusses (part 2) the Apple iPad.



## *SEMCO Meeting Pictures*



(Above): March speakers Tom Callow and Greg Zonca compare notes. (Below) Vice President Richard Jackson addresses the group.





**BOARD MEETING**  
**3/13/2011**  
**Carol Sanzi**

**Board Members Present**

Vice President Richard Jackson, Treasurer Bette Gay, Secretary Carol Sanzi, SIG-IBM Chairman Tom Callow, SIG-Advanced Chairman Franz Breidenich, Publications Committee Chairman Warner Mach, and Members at Large Bob Clyne and Brian Brodsky. The board meeting was called to order at 12:09 p.m.

**Old Business**

Bette Gay reported that the current treasury amount equaled a total of \$9,759.83 with \$5,012.50 in the checking account and \$4,747.33 invested in three Certificates of Deposit. The membership currently is 75. It is time for Ronald Green, Harold Langberg D.D.S., Randy Mims, and Michael Rudas to renew their memberships.

Bob Clyne reported that the Audit Committee met March 6. The Committee believes, after completing their review, that the financial statements prepared by the Treasurer and furnished to the Board for the 2010 fiscal year present a full and fair picture of the Organization's finances for such fiscal year and that the transactions of the Organization entered into during such fiscal year were proper.

SEMCO will be celebrating its 35th Anniversary in April. Richard Jackson asked for a commitment from members who will seek to promote SEMCO on the radio show, The Internet Advisor. It was determined that Steve Yuhasz, Warner Mach, Bob Clyne and Jim Rarus are willing to appear on the show. A date needs to be determined.

**New Business**

A discussion took place regarding the question/answer segment of the SEMCO meeting. Members' answers should be on topic and confined to answering the question. Such answers should not become a dissertation.

Bob Clyne moved to adjourn at 12:28. Carol Sanzi seconded the motion and it was carried.

**Copying Values in Excel**  
**By Sharon Parq Associates**

There are many ways that you can use Excel's tools to fill out various cells in a worksheet. One of the most common tools is to copy a cell (or cells) and then paste them into other cells. The only problem with this approach is that when you copy cells, you also copy the format of the original cells into the target cells. What if you just want to copy the values from the original cells, but retain the formatting already applied in the target cells?

You probably already know that you can use the Paste Special option from the Home tab of the ribbon (Excel 2007 and 2010) or the Edit menu (older versions of Excel), and then choose the Values option to paste just the values. If the target cells are right next to the original cells, there is an even easier way to accomplish the same task. Simply follow these steps:

1. Select the original cells whose values you want to copy.
2. Right-click on the fill handle (at the bottom right-corner of the selection) and drag the selection to encompass the

**[Continued on Page 21](#)**

## SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS (SIGS)



**SIG-IBM**  
**Tom Callow**

**April 10: 1:45 p.m. 35th Anniversary Meeting.** Cake! Door Prizes! Bring some of your ancient gear for display! Jim Rarus, one of the founders and one of the first SEMCO Presidents will show slides of a legendary pilgrimage to the very early sites of the microcomputer revolution—including a stop at the Altair factory.



**SIG-IBM**  
**INTERMEDIATE**  
**Warner Mach**

**April 10: 3:45 p.m. Computer History:** Several long-term members will discuss the topic, “The Future is Now!” What has happened over the past 35 years in the world of computers? What is possible now that was only dreamed of a few decades ago? Has anything been lost?

**Pictures: Recent SEMCO Meetings:** <<http://www.tinyurl.com/y8cm99e>>

**Video: Recent SEMCO Meeting:** <<http://www.tinyurl.com/363vnbd>>



**SIG-ADVANCED**  
**Franz Breidenich**

**April 19 (Tues): 5:30 p.m.:** At the Madison Heights Library located at 240 West 13 Mile Rd. one block West of John R. The parking lot entrance is off Brush St. The lot and entrance to the library is located in the back of the library. Topic: General discussion.



**SIG-LINUX**  
**Michael Rudas**  
**Mike Bader**



**April 26 (Tues): 6:45 p.m.:** At Motor City Free Geek, 1511 Jarvis St. Suite #10, Ferndale, MI 48220. The building is on the Northwest corner of Wanda and Jarvis - The first traffic light south of 9 Mile, on Wanda. Topic: TBA.

**May 2011 DATA BUS DEADLINE (7th day after 2nd Sunday in month)**  
**SEMCO Input and Members' Ads—Deadline: Sun., April 17, 11:59 p.m.** Members' personal ads are free. To mail, use Editor [address on Page 2](mailto:address on Page 2); e-mail address: <[warnermach@gmail.com](mailto:warnermach@gmail.com)>. PLEASE send to arrive sooner than deadline.  
**Business Ads - Deadline: Second Friday monthly.** Contact Editor ([address Page 2](mailto:address Page 2)).

**Warner Mach**[warnermach@gmail.com](mailto:warnermach@gmail.com)

(to post monthly computer group info)

**CALENDAR-OF-EVENTS  
OTHER GROUPS****COMP (Computer Operators of Marysville & Port Huron)**

**May 4**, 7 p.m., (1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday) Jane Wheatly 810-982-1187 or Pam Raisanen E-mail info: <[compinfo@greatlakes.net](mailto:compinfo@greatlakes.net)>. Web: <<http://www.bwcomp.org>>. Topic: "Everything You Wanted to Know About HD TV but Were Afraid to Ask"

**Focus: Hope IT User Group**

1400 Oakman, Detroit, MI. 48238. Web info <<http://www.fhitug.org>>. See web site for details. Pre-registration required.

**HUG (Holly User Group)**

**(Date?)** Groveland Twp. Fire Hall, 3085 Grange Hall Rd. & Dixie Hwy., Holly, MI. 48442.

**MacGroup-Detroit**

April 10, 3:00 p.m., Birmingham Temple, 28611 West 12 Mile Rd., Farmington Hills. Info: Terry White, <[terry@macgroup.org](mailto:terry@macgroup.org)> or 248-569-4933. <<http://www.macgroup.org>>. Topic: "All about the iPad 2. Tips, Tricks, and Apps!" You could win an iPad 2 at this meeting! SIGs: 2:00 PM.

**MacTechnics, (MAC User Group)**

April 16, (3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday ); See web site for meeting time and location. <<http://www.mactechnics.org>>. JoAnn Olson at 248-478-4300. Topic: "iPad 2, Adobe, or Pixelmator."

**MDLUG (Metro Detroit Linux User Group)**

April 9, 12:30–2:30 p.m., (2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday); MDLUG meetings will be at The Gaudior Academy located at 27100 Avondale Avenue in Inkster. Web: <<http://www.mdlug.org>>. Topic: Discussion on command line image manipulation using imagemagic.

**Motor City Free Geek**

Every Saturday 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. 1511 Jarvis St. Suite #10, Ferndale, MI 48220. <<http://www.motorcityfreegeek.net>>. E-mail: <[MotorCityFreeGeek@gmail.com](mailto:MotorCityFreeGeek@gmail.com)>. Recycling & Open Source.

**MUG (Michigan User Group)**

April 12, 6:00 p.m., (2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday): Engineering Society of Detroit. 20700 Civic Center Drive, Suite 450, Southfield, MI 48076 . <<http://www.mug.org>>. Topic: TBA.

**Oak Park Computer Club**

Every Fri., 10:15 a.m. at Oak Park Library, Oak Park Blvd. west of Coolidge.

**Royal Oak Computer Club**

Every Wed., 12:30 to 2:30 PM at Mahany/Meininger Senior Community Center, 3500 Marais Ave., Royal Oak, 48073. Near Crooks & 13 Mile. Guest speakers & regular monthly speakers. <<http://tinyurl.com/royaloakcc>>.

**SHCC (Sterling Heights Computer Club)**

May 3, 7:30 p.m.(1<sup>st</sup> Tues); Macomb Community College South Campus, Bldg. K, 14500 E. 12 Mile Rd. Don VanSyckel <[Don@VanSyckel.net](mailto:Don@VanSyckel.net)>, 586-731-9232; Web: <<http://www.SterlingHeightsComputerClub.org>>. Topic (tentative): "Being Social with Twitter, Facebook, and LinkedIn, part 2."



## Continued from Page 18

target cells. When you release the mouse button, a Context menu appears.

3. Choose the Fill Values option. Excel fills the target cells with the values from the original cells; the formatting remains unchanged.

*Copyright © 2011 by Sharon Parq Associates, Inc. Reprinted by permission. Thousands of free Microsoft Excel tips can be found online at <<http://excel.tips.net>>.*



### COMPUTER RESOURCE PEOPLE

This is a list of members willing to be resources for other members to call when they have hardware or software questions.

Are you willing to help members learn?

Which software programs are you familiar enough with?

It is not necessary to be an expert, but just have some familiarity with the program and be willing to help someone starting to learn it. Please give this some thought and volunteer at the next group meeting.

**Almost Anything:** Vander-Schrier

**AutoCAD:** Comptois

**Genealogy:** Cook

**IBM PC Hardware Issues:** Clyne, Yuhasz

**Operating Systems:** Callow, Clyne, Yuhasz

**MAC Hardware and OS Issues:** Yuhasz

**Security:** Bader

**MS Office for Windows:** Callow

**MS Word:** Clyne

**Networking:** Callow

**Novell Netware:** Yuhasz

**Quicken:** Clyne

**Geocaching:** Cook

**Relational Database Programming:** Lis

Bader, Mike—586-573-7330, 9am–8pm.....	<a href="mailto:mdbader@flash.net">mdbader@flash.net</a>
Callow, Tom—248-642-5770, 9am–5pm.....	<a href="mailto:tcallow@monaghanpc.com">tcallow@monaghanpc.com</a>
Clyne, Bob—810-387-3101, 9am–10pm.....	<a href="mailto:clyne@mich.com">clyne@mich.com</a>
Comptois, Jerry—248-651-2504, anytime	
Cook, Stephen—313-272-7594, eves.....	<a href="mailto:scook48227@ameritech.net">scook48227@ameritech.net</a>
Lis, Bernie—248-669-0101, 10am–8pm.....	<a href="mailto:BerLLis@comcast.net">BerLLis@comcast.net</a>
Vander-Schrier, Jack—586-739-7720, 12–8pm.....	<a href="mailto:jvanders@comcast.net">jvanders@comcast.net</a>
Yuhasz, Steve.....	<a href="mailto:Help@yuhasz.org">Help@yuhasz.org</a>



**SOUTHEASTERN MICHIGAN  
COMPUTER ORGANIZATION, INC.**

## **SEMCO CALENDAR**

**Engineering Society of Detroit  
20700 Civic Center Dr., Suite 450, 4th Floor  
Southfield, MI. 48076  
42°29'7" N by 83°14'29" W**

**April 10—SUNDAY (Meet 2nd Sunday)**

**SEMCO Board Meeting at 12:00 noon. For Officers and SIG Chairpersons.  
Other members are invited to attend.**

**SEMCO General Meeting at 1:30 p.m.**

**Special Interest Groups (SIGs)**

**SIG-IBM, 1:45 p.m., 35th Anniversary Meeting:** Cake! Door Prizes! Bring some of your ancient gear for display! Jim Rarus, one of the founders and one of the first SEMCO Presidents will show slides of a legendary pilgrimage to the very early sites of the microcomputer revolution—including a stop at the Altair factory.

**SOCIAL PERIOD 3:15 p.m.,** Refreshments! (Reminder: We must continue to maintain a neat environment.)

**SIG-IBM Intermediate, 3:45 p.m., Computer History:** Several long-term members will discuss the topic, "The Future is Now!" What has happened over the past 35 years in the world of computers? What is possible now that was only dreamed of a few decades ago? Has anything been lost?

**SIG-ADVANCED, April 19 (Tues): 5:30 p.m.:** At the Madison Heights Library located at 240 West 13 Mile Rd. one block West of John R. The parking lot entrance is off Brush St. The lot and entrance to the library is located in the back of the library. Topic: General discussion.

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**May 8—SEMCO Sunday**

**<http://www.semco.org>**

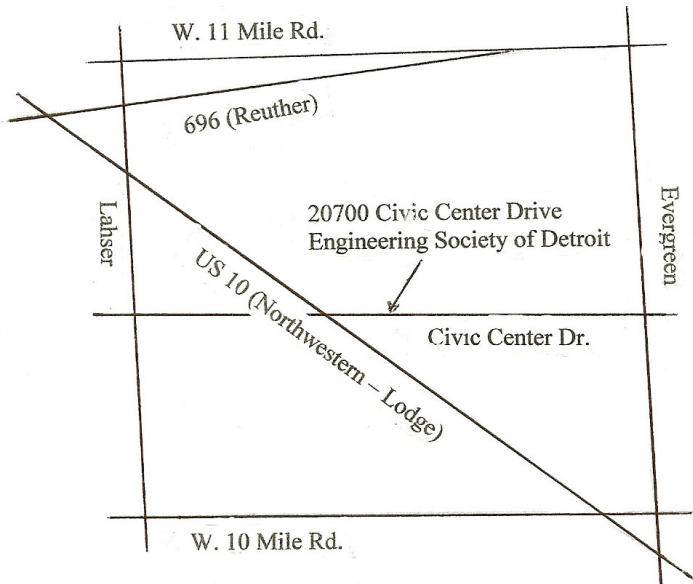
**PUBLIC INVITED**

**(Please copy this and the next page to post on your bulletin board)**



**SEMCO Meetings at Engineering Society of Detroit**  
**20700 Civic Center Drive, Suite 450, 4th Floor**  
**Southfield MI 48076.**

**42°29'7" N by 83°14'29" W**



From I-696 exit at Evergreen. Take Evergreen south to Civic Center Drive. Civic Center Drive is about halfway between I-696/Eleven Mile Rd. and 10 Mile Rd. Turn west, right if you are coming from the north, onto Civic Center Drive. Follow Civic Center Drive, watching the number signs on the right. When you get to the 20700 sign turn right, north, and follow the drive until you arrive at the southwest corner of the brown building with the Engineering Society of Detroit sign near the top. Turn right, east, and go past the front of the building. When you reach the end of the building, turn left, north and go to the back of the building and turn left, west, again. The parking lot will be on your right. The entrance is in the center of the building. Park in back of building. Enter the rear door. The ESD office is on the fourth floor.



**SouthEastern Michigan  
Computer Organization, Inc.  
P.O. Box 707  
Bloomfield Hills, MI 48303-0707**

**SEMCO (future meetings)**

**April 10**

**May 8**

**FIRST CLASS MAIL  
Dated Material**

**SEMCO: A Community Organization  
Helping People for the 21st Century**