



Official Newsletter  
SouthEastern Michigan  
Computer Organization, Inc.

# DATA BUS

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The SouthEastern Michigan Computer Organization, Inc. (SEMCO) is a non-profit, 501(c)(3), group dedicated to providing information, education and a forum to computer users (professional and amateur) and other interested individuals. Membership in SEMCO is open to all individuals 18 years or older. Persons under 18 years may become members through the sponsorship of a parent or guardian. Dues of \$30/year include monthly DATA BUS and free personal ads.

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## NOTICE OF NOMINATIONS

Please take notice that under the Bylaws of the SouthEastern Michigan Computer Organization, Inc., nominations for officers will be taken at the general meeting to be held Sunday, December 11, 2011 at 1:30 p.m., with the election of officers to be held at the January general meeting.

The following offices will be open for nominations:

- 1) President
- 2) Vice President
- 3) Secretary
- 4) Treasurer
- 5) Two Members-at-Large of the Board of Directors



**Many Free Programs  
from Microsoft  
By Ira Wilsker**

Microsoft is one of those companies that many of us have a love-hate relationship with. Despite some possible ill will towards Microsoft based on our experiences with Vista, BOB, and a myriad of other software issues, Microsoft does have a kind and generous side when it comes to producing and releasing for free, numerous pieces of useful software. My favorite free software directory, Gizmo's <<http://TechSupportAlert.com>> recently compiled and published

a comprehensive directory of free software from Microsoft, which can be found at <<http://www.techsupportalert.com/content/best-free-microsoft-downloads.htm>>.

Gizmo, and his volunteer staff, have tested and reviewed all of the free Microsoft software titles listed, and only those that met subjective quality and performance standards are listed. According to Gizmo and his staff, "An unavoidable fact is that some alternatives will be better than programs listed here, but the programs listed here are still good and useful - however, if a Microsoft program is ridiculously inferior to other free alternatives and simply not worth using, I won't include it. If a program has a loose affiliation with Microsoft but is not actually a Microsoft product (e.g. Paint.NET), it won't be listed here."

The Gizmo listings of free Microsoft software are categorized into eleven types of utilities, including security software, Internet, system tools, desktop, multimedia, office, educational, programming, online services, entertainment, and miscellaneous. At the top of the directory is a listing of recently added free Microsoft software. A few of these recently added programs include Standalone System Sweeper (creates bootable CD to scan and remove malware), Microsoft Safety Scanner (comprehensive computer scan to detect and remove malware), and Fix it Solution (Microsoft's automated utility to repair or correct many common Windows and Microsoft software problems).

I have been a strong proponent of securing our computers, and have repeatedly encouraged users to utilize any one or more of the many free or

commercial security utilities that are available. For those who may like the idea of using free security software from Microsoft, such software is available. One of Microsoft's most popular free software utilities is Microsoft Security Essentials, a decent and often well regarded utility that can provide real-time protection from viruses, spyware, and other common forms of malware, as well as scan for malware already on the computer. In its review of Security Essentials, Gizmo says, "This may be the best free product ever from Microsoft, and it was chosen as Gizmo's Freeware 2010 Product of the Year. MSE is a free anti-malware program with an interface ideal for average users, and effectiveness ideal for advanced users as well." Microsoft Security Essentials will run on any computer with Windows XP, Vista, or Windows 7. While this is an "essentials" program, only providing adequate protection against the most common threats, it does lack many of the features incorporated into other competitive free and commercial security products.

I am frequently asked about parental control software, programs that can give parents control over their children's Internet activities. Microsoft obliges with its free "Windows Live Family Safety," which comes in versions for Vista, Windows 7, and a special version for XP. This program can filter web content, and restrict e-mail contacts. Windows Live Family Safety can also create an activity log that allows parents to see who has been on the computer, and a list of which websites the child has visited.

Many Windows users like to tweak their computers in order to eke out any available performance increase,

or to better manage the software that is running on the computer. Microsoft has several excellent free system tools that can perform these tasks and more. One of my favorites, which I frequently use, is Microsoft's [Sysinternals Suite](#), a comprehensive collection of about 70 system utilities and troubleshooting tools that can be used to monitor and maintain most functions on the computer. Not all tools will run on all Windows machines (but most will), as some tools are XP only, while others will not run on XP, and some tools are for 32-bit systems only; still the majority of these utilities will run on most Windows machines. Another way of improving computer performance and speed, as well as to improve boot time, is to control what programs load when the computer is booted; Microsoft offers for free one of the finest startup managers available at any price, and this program is "Autoruns." Autoruns can also be used to identify and disable malware that loads itself in the boot process, a critical step in the removal of many types of malware. Autoruns, which will run on any XP or later computer, is one of the programs that I routinely install on almost all computers that I work on, and is seen by many IT professionals as a mandatory item to use to analyze potential PC problems.

Under the heading "Image Tools" in the Multimedia category, is another of my favorite free utilities, Microsoft Image Composite Editor (ICE). This program performs a task that most users are unaware of, but once used, becomes a fun task to accomplish when manipulating a series of digital photos or images. ICE is a "panorama stitcher" in that it can seamlessly merge a series of overlapping photos, and use them to

create a panoramic image. Once this panoramic image is created, ICE can be used to crop, rotate, and otherwise manage the image, and then save the new image in a variety of popular image formats. If the user chooses to do so, images created with ICE can be uploaded to Microsoft's Photosynth website ([photosynth.net](http://photosynth.net)) where they can join the 50,000 panoramic images that users have decided to share with the world.

Since taking digital photos and video have become some of the most popular personal activities, many of us have found a need to be able to edit our images and videos, but are often unwilling to pay for expensive editing software. For those who want a decent but free utility to accomplish those tasks, Microsoft offers Windows Live Photo Gallery and Windows Live Movie Maker. The Photo Gallery software enables the user to easily edit, organize, and tag digital photos. Like most of Microsoft's other free programs, Photo Gallery is totally adequate to carry out the most common image tasks, but it lacks many of the enhanced features found on more comprehensive competitive products. Windows Live Movie Maker, like Photo Gallery, offers the user the most common video editing functions. Movie Maker can also directly upload videos to YouTube, Facebook, and some other video hosting services. For anyone wanting to create a slideshow using digital photos, Photo Story 3 is a powerful program that can do that and much more. Photo Story 3 can create transition effects between images, pan, and zoom in on images, as well as add text to the images, audio narration, and music to the slideshow. Slideshows created with this software

are saved in the popular and universally viewable WMV (Windows Media) format.

One of my favorite programs in the Educational section is Microsoft Mathematics, which is a full featured mathematical and graphic calculator. This free program can solve equations, perform unit conversions, display 2 and 3 dimensional graphs, and can process algebra, trigonometry, and calculus. One very useful educational feature built in is its ability to display simple instructions on how to solve math problems, which is a valuable teaching and tutorial function. Microsoft originally sold this program commercially, but the newest version was released by Microsoft as freeware. One other interesting feature in Microsoft Mathematics is that it integrates with Word and OneNote as an add-in, which incorporates the math features into those programs.

These are but a few of the many free programs that Microsoft has made freely available to Windows users. It may be a worthwhile and profitable exercise to review the list of free software from Microsoft before purchasing some commercial software. All of this software is available for download directly from Microsoft for an excellent price, that is hard to beat—free!

#### **WEBSITES:**

<<http://www.techsupportalert.com/content/best-free-microsoft-downloads.htm>>.

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**More Free Academic  
Classes and Free  
College Textbooks  
By Ira Wilsker**

Some time ago, I wrote about sources of free academic classes and free college textbooks. Since writing that column, the selection of free courses and textbooks have grown exponentially. Three of the major providers of free academic resources are Khan Academy, Flat World Knowledge, and Apple's iTunes University.

Readers should be aware that these free resources are excellent for people of all ages, ranging from elementary school arithmetic lessons, to graduate school level economics. Content is appropriate not just for students, but also for anyone who desires to improve or enhance his intellectual abilities.

In many of the college classes that I teach, I routinely show my students the resources of the online Kahn Academy <<http://www.khanacademy.org>>, which offers over 2600 instructional videos, and over 200 interactive practice lessons and exercises. Someone somewhere must be using the services of the Khan Academy; the counter at the top of the [khanacademy.org](http://www.khanacademy.org) website shows that about 80 MILLION lessons and videos have been delivered. The 2600+ videos are all hosted on YouTube and are listed on a menu under the headings Math, Science, Humanities, Test Prep, and Talks and Interviews.

For anyone needing help or other assistance with any type of math topic, Khan Academy offers explanatory videos in basic arithmetic, developmental math, pre-algebra, algebra, brain teasers, geometry, trigonometry, probability, statistics, pre-calculus,

calculus, differential equations, and linear algebra. Many of these videos are also supplemented with worked examples. While the hundreds of math videos very clearly show and explain the concepts and how the problems are worked, for those who need or prefer to work interactive problems, the exercises section may prove to be both fun and beneficial. The basic format for the interactive lessons is the problem or question is displayed, along with a box in which to enter the answer (for those who may also need it, a digital scratch pad is also provided). If some help is needed, clicking on the "I'd like a hint" button will display an appropriate hint (or series of hints). If even more help is needed, the user can click on "Stuck? Watch a video" which plays an appropriate video demonstrating the lesson.

In the Kahn Science menu, educational videos are offered in biology, chemistry, organic chemistry, healthcare, medicine, physics, cosmology, astronomy, and computer science. I have personally found the Healthcare listings most interesting, as dozens of videos are available that may be of interest not just for students, but for anyone who would like to have more information on a wide variety of health topics, including diabetes, A1C, heart disease and heart attacks, strokes, colon health, endocrinology, pediatric growth and development, cancer and oncology, vitamins, health care costs, and other very relevant health topics.

In the "Humanities and Other" directory are some of my favorite topics which I have used both for personal enrichment and well as supplementary material in some of the college classes that I teach. Some of these topics

include history, civics, finance, money and banking, credit, and economics.

Many high school and college students are most aware of the highly competitive college and graduate school admission process, and how important scores are on entrance exams. To help these students, Kahn Academy offers some helpful test preparation videos that cover the SAT Math exam, GMAT (entrance exam for MBA programs), California specific exams, competitive math tests, and national exams from India and Singapore.

Under “Talks and Interviews” are several dozen videos featuring Salman Kahn, the creator of the Kahn Academy, as well as recorded news stories about the academy.

With the very widespread use of iPads, iPhones, and other Apple products, Apple’s iTunes service has started “iTunes U” which offers over 350,000 free lectures, videos and films from universities, museums, and other educational resources <<http://www.apple.com/education/itunes-u>>. It is not required that the user be a student, as most of the content is freely available to all users. Approximately 400 universities, including Stanford, Yale, MIT, Oxford, and UC Berkeley distribute their content publicly on the iTunes Store, and another 400 colleges and universities use the iTunes U service for the posting of syllabi, schedules, lecture outlines, study guides, notes, maps, and entire books. Much of this educational material is available in compliance with the open ePub standard, which will display not just on Apple products, but any compatible e-reader. Some documents are available in PDF, MP3, MPEG-4, and other universally accessible formats, which

enable easy access with almost any type of computer, reader, or smart device. While almost all of this iTunes U content is freely available in a variety of convenient formats, the access requires the installation of Apple’s free iTunes software, available for both PCs and MACs from <<http://www.apple.com/itunes>>.

The number and availability of free college textbooks has been expanding greatly. I have recently been considering the free college textbooks offered by Flat World Knowledge for my students <<http://flatworldknowledge.com>>. As of the Spring 2009 semester, over 1600 college faculty at over 900 colleges have selected the Flat World Knowledge textbooks for their students. At present, Flat World Knowledge offers textbooks in business, accounting, economics, management, marketing, humanities, social sciences, professional and applied sciences, mathematics (algebra), and natural sciences (biology, chemistry). The fully functional free textbooks are available as online e-books, accessible with any Internet browser and with any operating system, and are written by many of the same authors that have written successful commercial college textbooks in the past. Being maintained and edited digitally, many of the free online e-books are more up to date than their expensive printed competitors. While some students may prefer their own copies of textbooks, rather than fully online copies, Flat World offers optional relatively inexpensive alternatives, in addition to the free online version. One somewhat representative example is the current business law textbook that I am using in my class, which is traditionally published, and retails for \$180, a price many students find excessive for a new



book (used copies are available for much less). By contrast, the Flat World Knowledge business law textbook, which is a direct competitor to the one that I am currently using, with similar content, is free for the online version, about \$20 if the student wants the entire text in a downloadable PDF format, about \$30 for a black and white printed version, and about \$45 for a printed color version. Individual chapters can also be purchased in PDF format for about \$2 per chapter, and other supplemental materials such as student study guides are available for a nominal fee. The choice between the free, PDF, and printed versions is solely the choice of the students, and in a survey of my students, about half would choose the free online version. By choosing the free online version, the student can still save digital notes, highlight, and mark the online copy almost as they can a paper copy, with the content available wherever they have Internet access, including on smart phones. For the college faculty member, nothing is lost as far as support, because printed desk copies, PowerPoint slides, test banks, teacher manuals, and other materials are freely available.

School and textbooks have changed substantially since I was last an academic student. With free resources such as the Khan Academy, iTunes U, and Flat World Knowledge, there are materials and support available for students and other learners of all ages. These new educational technologies may significantly change the models used by schools, colleges, and textbook publishers. They are a feature rich group of free services that can go far in improving our level of educational attainment.

## WEBSITES:

<http://www.khanacademy.org>.

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

<https://www.apple.com/education/itunes-u>.

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### Questions and Answers By Pamela Tabak

*Pamela Tabak receives numerous computer-related questions via e-mail and during classroom presentations. She selects those she feels are of common interest to most computer users and forwards them to publications.*

QUESTION: How can I lock a formula in Excel 2007 so that it cannot be changed?

ANSWER:

1. Select the cell containing the formula you wish to lock by highlighting it.
2. Click on the "Home" tab, which is located on the top of the Excel window.
3. Select "Format." from the "Cells" module, which is on the right half of the Excel window. A menu displaying cell formatting options will appear.
4. Click on the "Protection" section of the format menu. Click on "Lock Cell," highlighting the lock icon.



5. You need to “Protect” the worksheet in order to lock the formula. The formula will not lock unless the worksheet is protected. Repeat steps 2 and 3. Select “Protect Sheet” from the cell formatting menu. A dialog box titled “Protect Sheet” will appear.

6. Select the “Protect worksheet and contents of locked cells” option. Type in a password that users must enter to unprotect the worksheet into the password field; this is not a required step. In the “Allow all users of this worksheet to” section, choose privileges that you wish users to have when working with the worksheet. Finish by clicking “OK.”

QUESTION: Is there a way to save the battery life on an iPad? Mine seems to run out fast.

ANSWER: Double clicking on the “Home” button at the bottom of your iPad, shows the icons of the APPS that are running. An icon is created automatically each time you use an APP and runs in the background until you turn it off manually. These icons are useful when jumping from APP to APP while you are working on your iPad but by running in the background they are using your battery life.

When you have finished your project and will not be using your iPad for a few hours, you will need to turn off the icons that are running in the background manually to prolong your battery charge as follows:

1. Double click on the “Home” button at the bottom of your iPad to show the APPS that are running in the background.

2. Press on one of the icons to make them shake; a minus sign will also appear.

3. Tap each icon with a minus sign and it will close.

If you do this on a regular basis you will find that your battery life is prolonged.

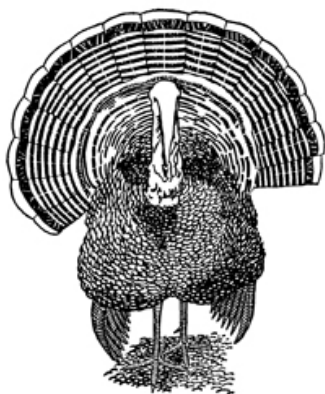
QUESTION: If I leave my iPad or iPhone at a restaurant or just lose it completely, is there a way that it can be traced?

ANSWER: Apple’s Find My iPad works for MobileMe subscribers, but you can set it up for free on your iPad. In Settings go to Mail, Contacts, Calendars. Tap the Add Account button and select MobileMe.

If you have an iTunes or MobileMe account then enter it here. Alternatively, tap on Create Free Apple ID. You may need to check your inbox and verify your account now. Return to the MobileMe screen and switch on Find My iPad.

Sign into me.com to see your iPad on a map, or install the Find My iPhone app from the App Store.

*Pamela Tabak is associated with Computer Tutor Inc. She invites you to e-mail computer-based questions to: <<http://tinyurl.com/ask-pamela-computer-tutor>>. More often than not you will receive and answer within 24 hours.*





## Of Interest Links (OIL) Fred Acerri

### Neutrinos: Ghostly Particles With Unstable Egos

<<http://www.redorbit.com/news/science/2607444/neutrinos-ghostly-particles-with-unstable-egos/index.html>>.

### Aztec Maps Put Cortés to Shame

<<http://news.sciencemag.org/sciencenow/2011/08/aztec-maps-put-cortes-to-shame.html>>.

### Baseball's winning formula

<[http://www.eurekalert.org/pub\\_releases/2011-09/uod-bwf092911.php](http://www.eurekalert.org/pub_releases/2011-09/uod-bwf092911.php)>.

### Scientists release most accurate simulation of the universe to date

<[http://www.eurekalert.org/pub\\_releases/2011-09/uoc--srm092911.php](http://www.eurekalert.org/pub_releases/2011-09/uoc--srm092911.php)>.

### The Trouble With Health Problems Near Gas Fracking

<<http://www.npr.org/2011/09/29/140872251/the-trouble-with-health-problems-near-gas-fracking>>.



## How to Make Your Computer Useless By Vinny La Bash

### Make Your Computer Either Stupid, Useless or a Zombie

There are many ways to make your computer useful and reliable: add memory, buy more storage, and be sure to purchase gear and peripherals from reliable vendors. Some people nevertheless, seem determined to find ways to get into trouble. As a TV ad once proclaimed, "We all do dumb

things from time to time," but making your computer useless doesn't have to be one of them.

Inadvertently choosing a wrong key combination, clicking OK in an online dialog box designed to deceive you into unknowingly downloading malware or unthinkingly doing something genuinely dumb are all preventable. They are easily avoided if only a small amount of premeditated thought and common sense are applied.

Are you a "Nervous Newbie?" People new to computers are often fearful of damaging their equipment. Don't worry! No matter what crazy combination of keystrokes you activate, the computer will not explode. Short of throwing the thing off a rooftop or beating it with a blunt instrument, it's highly unlikely you could do anything to seriously affect your hardware.

Instead, ask yourself, "What would happen if I lost all my data?" The answer will determine what kind of backup plan you should implement. If all you do is surf the Internet, fool around playing games, and spend time on a social network site, you don't need much of a backup plan. If you run a business that depends on data that must be constantly updated, losing it all may mean you will retire much earlier than you anticipated at a reduced standard of living. Your personal situation is probably somewhere between these two examples.

Most people are at least vaguely aware that they should back up their system, but never get around to it because it's too much trouble. System crashes and data loss occur for many reasons. Power surges, lightning strikes, hardware failures, software glitches,

and user error are among the common causes of losing information.

Your data is the most important part of your system. You can always reinstall a program, but there is nowhere you can go to buy a copy of your precious data. You must make a copy of your information, and have a recovery plan in place before disaster strikes. You don't have to buy a backup program. Windows 7 has a perfectly good one built-in. You can quickly find it in Control Panel. Use it. You won't be sorry.

Store your backups on a removable disk or flash drive. An increasingly popular alternative is to store data online. Whatever you do, it's important to keep your backups at a location away from your computer to protect against theft of your system or natural disasters. To find the best method for your personal needs there is no better place than your local computer user group. You will find centuries of experience at your disposal.

Losing your data is no fun, but losing your entire system can be much worse. No computer should operate unprotected from electrical surges. The best form of protection is with an Uninterruptible Power Supply (UPS). It is internally powered by a battery that ensures a smooth flow of power even if an outage occurs. This gives you sufficient time for an orderly shutdown to avoid not only loss of information, but physical damage to the computer. Most surge suppressors are worse than useless because they give you a false sense of security.

A surge suppressor can protect a system from a voltage spike usually at a cost of severe internal damage to the surge suppressor. There is seldom any visible sign of harm so it's easy to

assume you are still protected when you are not. A high quality UPS provides far more safety.

Most of us like a genuine bargain, and a great temptation is to believe free is always better than merely inexpensive. There are many high quality freeware programs, and many of dubious value. Some freeware programs are so sloppily written they can cause your computer to behave erratically or come to a screeching halt. Even if you take care to research and install only the best of the best, too many installs and uninstalls create useless entries in the registry. If not properly removed, these registry orphans can create their own problems such as system slowdowns and strange behavior. For good system performance, install only the programs you really need, and keep your installs and uninstalls to a minimum.

Terabyte-sized hard drives have made fragmentation less of an issue than with smaller capacity disks, but it can still be a problem if you neglect it too long. Fragmentation will become a non-issue when solid state drives eventually replace standard hard disks. Until that happy day arrives it makes sense to keep your files neatly arranged so the mechanical parts of your drive can take less time accessing programs and information. Files become fragmented through editing documents and other normal usage of computers including surfing the web. Excessive fragmentation forces your hard drive to perform extra work that eventually noticeably slows down your computer.

Windows 7 has an excellent built in defrag tool that you can access through the Systems Tools folder. The tool runs on a schedule, but you can run it manually anytime. The tool will

defrag your system drive, removable storage devices such as USB flash drives, and almost any external storage device where you can store and delete files. Disk Defragmenter runs on an automated schedule, but you can also analyze and defrag your disks and drives manually.

Even if you own a solid state drive that never needs to be defragged, you can still run into trouble by letting it get too full. If you find yourself with a drive that's using more than 90% of its capacity, applications can suddenly exhibit very abnormal behavior. The system has no place to put temporary files, and if a drive runs out of room, it can simply stop leaving you wondering what happened. An easy preventive is to use the Disk Cleanup Tool once or twice a month.

Are you guilty of indiscriminate link clicking? We all know about the danger of downloading attachments that could cause havoc with our systems, but do you click on hyperlinks embedded in e-mails? This could take you to web sites having implanted ActiveX controls designed to either damage your equipment, spy on you to collect passwords or track your activities to target you for personalized advertising among other nefarious reasons.

Some hackers are eager to install back-door or Trojan horses designed to allow them to control your computer without you being aware of it. Your computer could end up being a remotely controlled Zombie soldier in an army of similar machines to launch Distributed Denial of Service attacks.

Carelessly clicking on links could get you to very inappropriate sites that feature pornography, pirated videos, music or other kinds of software which

could cause you personal embarrassment and even your job. People have been known to get in trouble with the law when a simple mouse click brought them to a child pornography site.

Think before you click. Bring your mouse pointer over the link. Often this simple act will reveal the real URL the link may be trying to disguise. If you aren't sure the link isn't going to take you to [www.yourpcistoast.com](http://www.yourpcistoast.com) don't do it.

We've covered a fair amount of territory here, but there is more danger lurking on the web than is dreamed of in your philosophy, Horatio. Choosing weak passwords, surfing the web without a firewall, failing to update anti-virus programs, and creating shared folders that the wrong people can access are among many additional dangers there simply isn't room for in this article.

Don't conclude that the web is too dangerous a place for you. The cautions mentioned here is the web equivalent of telling people to stay away from crime-ridden neighborhoods, and don't step off the curb into oncoming traffic without looking to see if it's safe first. As always, common sense is your first and best defense.

*Vinny LaBash is a regular columnist with the Sarasota PCUG, Florida. Article is from the September 2011 issue of the Sarasota Monitor. Web: <[www.spcug.org](http://www.spcug.org)>. E-mail him at: <[labash\(at\)spcug.org](mailto:labash(at)spcug.org)>.*

**Binary Day  
11-11-11.**

## **Tech Tip: How to Recover Data from a Dead Hard Drive**

**By Bryan Lambert**

One of the most dreadful feelings that you can have is having a pc computer or laptop die that hadn't been backed up recently; especially if you have valuable pictures, music, videos, documents or other files on it.

In this Tech Tip we'll take a look at how to recover your valuable pictures from a dead computer.

### **Where to start**

Computers are complex machines and when they work right, they are fun to use — but when something goes drastically wrong, it can feel as if your world crashed down around you. If your hard drive is still in working order, there is a very good chance that you'll be able to recover your pictures, music, videos and valuable documents (and other data) simply with another computer; a specialized cable, a screwdriver; and a little time.

To start off, your best bet is to get a specialized USB cable that can plug directly into your hard drive that you'll recover from the dead computer. There are several types, and I'd recommend getting one that can handle both PATA (IDE) and SATA hard drives (the two most common used in consumer computers) as well as 2.5" (laptop) and 3.5" (desktop) hard drives <<http://www.Geeks.com>> sells several that run in the \$13-16 range). You can also use a hard drive dock or external drive cases as well — but personally I find the specialized USB cable to be the easiest and most flexible option.

Next, remove the hard drive from the dead computer. On desktops it

is usually held in with four Philips screws and on laptops it is usually under an access panel on the bottom of the computer. Remove any cables and caddies that the drive may have — all you need is the bare drive. Then plug in the USB cable into the hard drive (and a power cable if it is a desktop drive — also provided with the USB cable kit) and then plug the other end of the USB cable into a working computer. The computer will then set up the drive and an external storage device and voilà! you'll now have access to the files on that drive (provided that the drive is not encrypted or using some type of security feature).

### **Where to look**

OK, so the drive is now plugged into your computer and seen as an external drive, now what? You have several options. One option is to simply look for the files on the drive from the dead computer that you plugged into the USB port and copy them onto the working computer. This is my preferred method personally. I like to "brute force" my way through the drive with Windows Explorer (or a similar file browsing tool) and manually copy/paste the data from one computer to the other. Another option is to follow a Windows dialog box (that usually pops up when you plug in an external drive) and have it help you copy your data from one computer to the other. If you are manually choosing to "brute force it" personal data is usually stored by default in the computers operating systems "home directory" for users.

### **Common Locations**

For home directories (where <root> takes the place of the drive letter):

1. Microsoft Windows 95-Me <root>\My Documents

2. Microsoft Windows 2000/ XP/2003 <root>\Documents and Settings\<username>

3. Microsoft Windows Vista / Windows 7 <root>\Users\<username>

### **Other “What ifs”**

What if the files on the drives are erased? If they are, you can use a free recovery program such as Piriform’s Recuva to look for and (hopefully) restore the files. This simple, easy-to-use tool is terrific for recovering pictures from a camera’s memory card that have accidentally been erased as well!

What if the hard drive is the reason that the computer died (actual hardware failure)? If the hard drive is the part that caused the computer failure, then you may be out of luck. Yes, there are specialty recovery services that will pull apart the drives data platters and attempt to recover data, and they are usually successful, (Such services were used, for example, to recover data from the hard drives that were used on computers from the space shuttle Columbia after it broke apart in 2003) but such services are usually very expensive.

### **A word to the wise**

Backup, backup, backup! Whether using one of the Internet based cloud services or a separate external hard drive — if you make it a habit of backing up regularly, chances are good that you’ll keep the loss of such a failure to a minimum if a computer fails. Of course one of the benefits of using cloud-based backup services is that you can have access to your pictures anywhere you have Internet access.

### **Summing it up**

A computer that dies can be a loss — but don’t lose hope that your valuable pictures (and other stuff) are gone forever. With a little work, you can

retrieve your data off the hard drives from a dead computer!

*Bryan Lamert is a representative of Geeks.com. Web: <<http://www.geeks.com>>.*

## **The Tip Corner** **By Bill Sheff**

### **Windows 7**

Just got Windows 7? Notice something missing? Well if you want to see a list of what happened to those programs you liked in XP or Vista here is a simple way to find out. Open Help and Support then type “What happened” in the search box. Windows will give you lots of results for the query, such as: What happened to the NetBEUIprotocol?, What happened to ActiveSync?, What happened to Sticky Notes?, What happened to Windows Calendar?, What happened to the Run as command?, What happened to the Quick Launch toolbar?” and many more.

Say you picked the “What happened to the Run command?” This is what you get: “The Run command no longer appears on the Start menu in this version of Windows. The search box that appears on the Start menu provides much of the same functionality as the Run command. However, the Run command is still available if you prefer to use it. You can even add it to the Start menu for easier access.

To add the Run command to the Start menu Click to open Taskbar and Start Menu Properties. Click the Start Menu tab, and then click Customize. In the list of Start menu options, select the Run command check box, and then click OK. The Run command will be displayed on the right side of the Start menu.



Tip: You can also access the Run command by pressing the Windows logo key +R. Check it out.”

### **Google Images**

A while ago Google switched over to a different display method for their images. If you want to turn it off and go back to the original, here's what you do: Scroll to the very bottom of your Google image search and click on Switch to basic version. If you want to go back to the regular way, simply scroll back to the bottom and click Switch to standard version.

### **System Tools**

Just for a little review, there are a bunch of very useful programs in the System Tools folder. To get to them you access the System Tools by going to All Programs | Tools. When you open the folder in XP you can find the following programs:

► **CHARACTER MAP**, which allows you to copy and paste letters and symbols from other fonts into your document without switching fonts.

► **DISK CLEANUP**, which frees up space on your hard drive by eliminating unused and temporary files.

► **DISK DEFRAGMENTER (Defrag)**, which speeds up your computer by reassigning or eliminating stray bits of data.

► **FILESANDSETTINGSTRANSFER WIZARD**, for transferring files and data from one drive to another.

► **INTERNET EXPLORER (NO ADD-ONS)**, which allows you to access the Internet without any Explorer addons interfering with it.

► **SCHEDULED TASKS**, which allows you to schedule a specific time to run updater, defrag, and other system programs.

► **SYSTEM INFORMATION**, which tells you the basic ram, processor, etc., of your system.

► **SYSTEM RESTORE**, which will restore your Windows system to an earlier time.

In Vista and Win 7 you can find all of the above and more. Check it out.

### **Templates**

A template is a prepared form or pattern within various programs such as document and spreadsheet programs. They allow a user to develop a form that allows for easy entry and automatically formats and calculates data.

If you are a user of the Microsoft Office suite you are probably aware of them as Microsoft makes mention of templates and even has a folder of them within their suite.

But are you aware that there are literally hundreds located on the Internet? But that is not all. There are even templates designed for the free suite put out by Open Office. Just Google open office templates and find body mass calculators, ovulation schedules time cards, shift scheduling and so much more.

You do not have to reinvent the wheel every time you sit at your computer. One little caveat though, these are usually presented by users and sometimes do not cover all you would like to find in a template. But do not lose heart, once downloaded you can continue to tweak the form until it does what you want the way you want it.

*Bill Sheff is Novice SIG Coordinator, Lehigh Valley Computer Group, PA. Article appeared in the August 2011 issue, The LVCG Journal. Web: <<http://www.lvcg.org>>. E-mail: <[nsheff\(at\)aol.com](mailto:nsheff(at)aol.com)>.*



## *SEMCO Meeting Pictures*



Don Singleton (Above left) talks to the group about Google Calendar. Tom Callow (Above right) adjusts the Internet interface for the talk. Tom Callow (Below) discusses “Windows 8.”



## ***SEMCO Meeting Pictures***



Members during refreshment break.





**BOARD MEETING**  
**10/9/2011**  
**Carol Sanzi**

**Board Members Present**

Vice President Richard Jackson, Treasurer Bette Gay, Secretary Carol Sanzi, SIG-Computing Chairman Tom Callow, SIG-Advice 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 12:06 p.m.

**Old Business**

Bette Gay reported that the current treasury amount equaled a total of \$9,664.84 with \$4,913.73 in the checking account and \$4,751.11 invested in three Certificates of Deposit. The membership currently is 79.

**New Business**

Bob Clyne moved to authorize the payment of \$100 to the Engineering Society of Detroit for SEMCO's Affiliate Society dues. Tom Callow seconded the motion and it was carried.

Bob Clyne moved to authorize the payment of \$50 for SEMCO's APCUG dues for 2012. Tom Callow seconded the motion and it was carried.

Warner Mach moved to have a planning meeting in February in lieu of the volunteer's party. Carol Sanzi seconded the motion and it was carried with 4 votes in favor, 3 votes opposed, and 1 vote abstaining.

Richard will contact Pamela Tabak of Computer Tutor Inc. She has offered her expertise in assisting SEMCO in building our membership.

Bob Clyne moved to adjourn at 12:27. Brian Brodsky seconded the motion and it was carried.



**Just BASIC**  
**By Warner Mach**

Some of the SEMCO members have formed a programming group to learn and use a variation of BASIC known as "Just BASIC."

Richard Jackson has organized the group and we are currently meeting every couple of weeks. For more information about the meetings, contact Richard at the SEMCO meeting, or call the phone number on page 2 of the DATA BUS.

Just BASIC is free and can be downloaded from <<http://www.justbasic.com>>. The book we are using is "Programming for the Absolute Beginner," by Jerry Lee Ford. This can be ordered from Amazon.

Mike BADER has put up a list of links to Just BASIC information. This can be accessed at: <<http://tinyurl.com/JustBASIC>>.



**SEMCO YAHOO**  
**Group (SEMCOUG)**  
**By Warner Mach**

For members who are not aware of it, SEMCO is on "YAHOO Groups." This allows members to ask questions of other members and to post items of interest.

To take full advantage of the facility, first get an account on Yahoo <<http://www.yahoo.com>> -> mail -> create new account. Then sign on to the SEMCO web site <<http://www.semco.org>> -> SEMCO Discussion Forum -> Join SEMCOUG (log on using the yahoo account).

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

## SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS (SIGS)



**SIG-COMPUTING**  
Tom Callow

**Nov. 13: 1:45 p.m. Holiday Gifts:** Richard Tapaninen of the “Micro Center” computer store will reveal, “What’s Hot for the Holidays.”

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

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

**Podcasts: Podcasts of SEMCO meetings can be found at:** <<http://www.semco.org/podcasts.htm>>.



**SIG-TECHNIQUES**  
Warner Mach

**Nov. 13: 3:45 p.m. : Recovery:** When it’s too late to back up—how to get your data back: SIG-Computing Chairman Tom Callow will discuss data recovery and demonstrate how to use some data recovery utilities, such as Diskinternals NTSF Recovery, Final Recovery and Recuva.



**SIG-ADVICE**  
Franz Breidenich

**Nov. 15 (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



**Nov. 22 (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: **Security:** “Head ‘Em Off at the Pass(words)—A Security Round-up.” General security issues, Linux-specific security, and using Linux tools to protect and repair Windows installations.

### **Dec. 2011 DATABUS DEADLINE (7th day after 2nd Sunday in month)**

**SEMCO Input and Members’ Ads—Deadline: Sun., Nov. 20, 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)**

Dec. 7, 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: General Meeting and Christmas Party.

**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)**

Nov. 12, 8, 9 a.m.-noon (2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday) Groveland Twp. Fire Hall, 3085 Grange Hall Rd. & Dixie Hwy., Holly, MI. 48442. Ron McCauley 810-629-9683. Topic: TBA.

**MacGroup-Detroit**

Nov. 20, 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: "The New Adobe Photoshop Elements 10 and Premiere Elements 10." SIGs: 2:00 PM.

**MacTechnics, (MAC User Group)**

Nov. 19, (3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday ); See web site for meeting time and location. <<http://www.mactechnics.org>>. JoAnn Olson at 248-478-4300. Topic: "Terry White, Guest Speaker"

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

Nov. 12, 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: TBA.

**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)**

Nov. 8, 6:00 p.m., (2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday): Farmington Community Library-Main Branch, 32737 W. 12 Mile Rd., Farmington Hills, MI. 48334. <<http://www.mug.org>>. Topic: Les Orchard: Web Development and Virtual Machines.

**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)**

Dec. 6, 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: "Windows 8 — A First Look" will be presented by Michael Bader from Lan Solutions

Continued from Page 18

It is also possible to just monitor the discussions through an RSS feed. For example, with Google reader, when it asks for the blog, enter: <<http://rss.groups.yahoo.com/group/semcoug/rss>>. (Info courtesy of Bill Landrum).

For other options, if you don't want a YAHOO ID, contact list owner (and SEMCO President) Mike Bader ([phone number on page 2 of the DATA BUS](#)).



Note: For the Key Word to get the 30% discount see any SEMCO officer or member of the board.



**User Group Members SAVE 30%**  
**learn · master · create**

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

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



**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**

**Nov. 13—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-COMPUTING, 1:45 p.m., Holiday Gifts:** Richard Tapaninen of the “Micro Center” computer store will reveal, “What's Hot for the Holidays.”

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

**SIG-TECHNIQUES, 3:45 p.m. Recovery:** When it's too late to back up—how to get your data back: SIG-Computing Chairman Tom Callow will discuss data recovery and demonstrate how to use some data recovery utilities, such as Diskinternals NTSF Recovery, Final Recovery and Recuva.

**SIG-ADVICE, Nov. 15 (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, Nov. 22 (Tues): 6:45 p.m.:** At Motor City Free Geek, 1511 Jarvis St. Suite #10, Ferndale, MI 48220. **Topic: Security:** “Head 'Em Off at the Pass(words)—A Security Round-up.” General security issues, Linux-specific security, and using Linux tools to protect and repair Windows installations.

**Dec. 11—SEMCO Sunday**

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

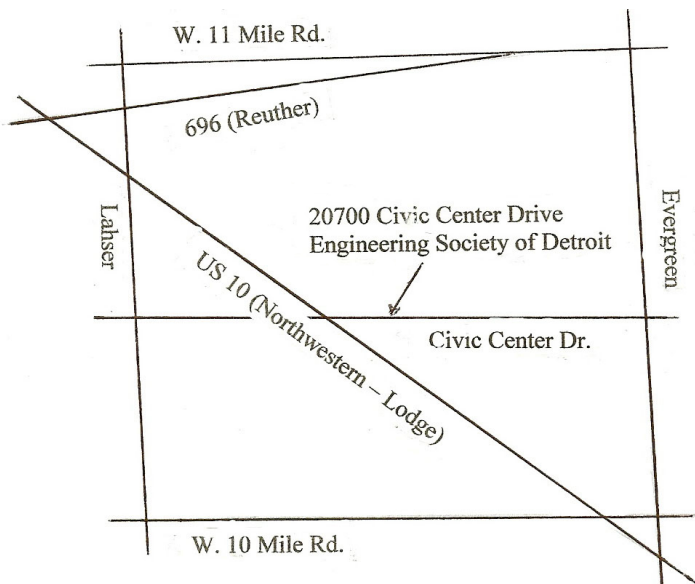
**PUBLIC INVITED**

**(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)  
November 13  
December 11**

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