Member of
apcug
An International Association of Technology & Computer User Groups

SEPTEMBER MEETING

Thursday, Sept. 21, 2017

7 pm

Fox Valley Technical College

Bordini Center

Presentation by

Nan MacDonald

RAMblings
By Sharon Wichman, NEW PCUG President

Hey everyone, I hope you all got to watch the eclipse. Wasn't it great?

Well anyway, this month's presenter is Nan, but I'm not sure what she decided to demonstrate. Lol. I guess we just have to go and find out. I think it might be something about free software again. Like I said, we are running out of new things to talk about. If anyone has any suggestions please let us know.

I was thinking of doing a presentation on RealPlayer again. They changed the name to RealTime and it's easier to download any video but they charge per year for the license. It uses Google Chrome to download any video that is on the web.

So I hope to see you all next Thursday and remember to bring some suggestions. If anyone has any new programs they have that they would like to demonstrate let me know. Also Tom could use some of our reviews; I know we got away from that through the years.

See ya then.

Articles in this newsletter are provided as a service of the Association of Personal Computer User Groups, of which our group is a member

Customize Your Quick Access Toolbars in Office

By Nancy DeMarte, 2nd Vice President, Sarasota Technology Users Group, FL
www.thestug.org; ndemarte (at) verizon.net

Microsoft Office offers hundreds of tools on its extensive "ribbon" structure. A user can spend a long time trying to locate a specific tool. To relieve that frustration, Office added a Quick Access toolbar to some of its Office applications and recently to the File Explorer window.

Located in the upper left corner of the title bar above the ribbon tabs, the Quick Access toolbar is always visible, which makes it a handy place to store your favorite tools. It contains a few icons to get you started, such as Save, Undo, and Redo. You can, however, customize this area to include any tools you want. It isn't difficult and can save you a lot of extra clicks. Using Word as an example, first open a document to reveal the Quick
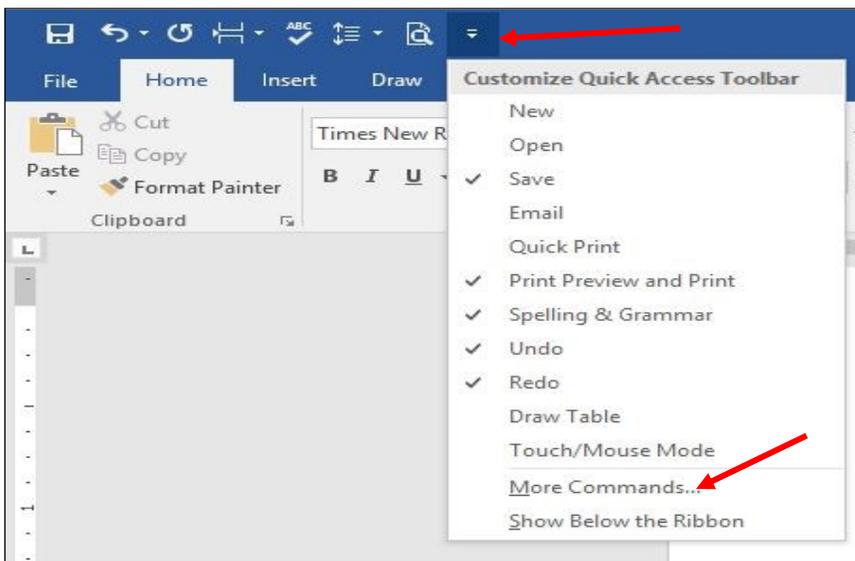

Access toolbar above the left end of the ribbon.

Then click the downward pointing triangle with a line over it at the right end of the Quick Access toolbar. This opens a menu of the most popular tools (commands). (Fig 1) Clicking an item puts a checkmark next to it, which adds it to Quick Access.

To see more tools, click "More Commands." This opens a large dialogue box (Fig 2) that contains all the tools and commands which are part of Office, such as Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and Outlook.

Take a careful look at this large box. In the list on the left side, Quick Access toolbar should be highlighted. If it isn't, click to select it. In the center pane is an alphabetical, scrollable list called "Choose commands from" with "Popular Commands" displayed.

If you don't find the tool you're looking for in the extensive Popular Commands list, you can click the down arrow next to Popular Commands and select the huge "All Commands" list. If you still have no success, try "Commands not found on the Ribbon," which includes tools such as the Envelope and Label Wizard, Auto-Correct Sentence Caps, and Decrease Paragraph Spacing.
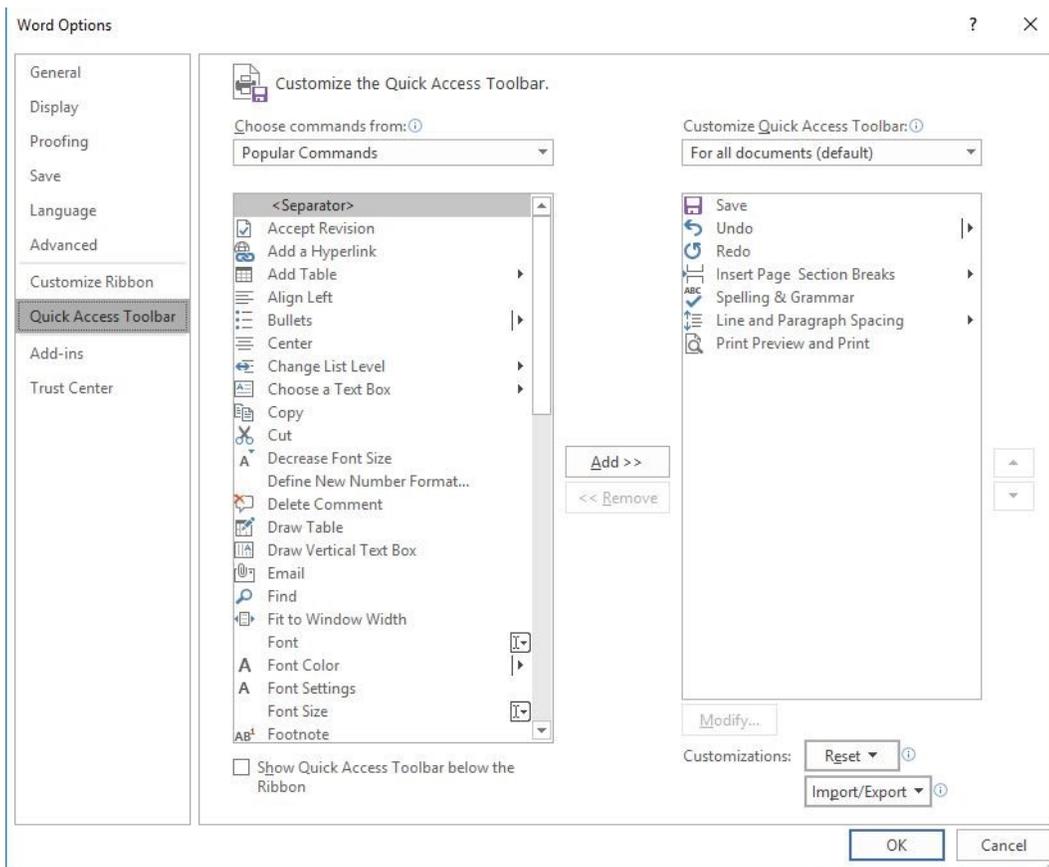
To add a command to the Quick Access toolbar, click a tool in the left pane, then click "Add" between the panes, and the tool will appear in the right pane. Click OK to close the box. Notice that below "Add" is "Remove." You can remove tools from the Quick Access bar by clicking a tool in the right pane and then Remove. In the bottom right corner of the dialogue box are two other options: "Reset" and "Import/Export." Click Reset to return your Quick Access toolbar to its factory setting. Import/Export can put all your customized settings into a file to be exported to another computer using a thumb drive or other media.

Tips:

1. Make sure you add only tools you use regularly to Quick Access. You don't want to clutter your window with another long line of icons above the Ribbon. Some of my favorites in Word are the Spelling and Grammar checker, Line and Paragraph spacing, and Print Preview and Print.

2. You can position the Quick Access bar below the ribbon instead of above. Click the arrow at the right end of the Quick access bar and select the last item, "Show below the Ribbon."

3. This same large dialogue box can be used to customize the Ribbon. Click "Customize Ribbon" in the list on the left directly above Quick Access Toolbar. You add or remove tabs and tools to make the Ribbon fit your needs.

Look for Quick Access toolbars or lists across many of the Microsoft applications. They can save you time and effort.

Customer Support by Erica

Dan Douglas, President, Space Coast PC Users Group, FL
www.scpcug.org; ringram28 (at) cfl.rr.com

My daughter Erica was visiting this week and I told her that sometimes I get stumped on what to write for the journal each month. She came up with what I think was a great idea – what actually happens when you call a Customer Support line and how to make those calls more effective for you to get the help that you need. I spent most of my career working on software to log the critical parts of a customer call for service and she reviews and manages people who actually take those calls at an AT&T call center. Here's Erica's take on Customer Service and how to get better results!

You know that message when you call customer service that says the call "may be monitored or recorded for quality assurance"? My job is to listen to those calls and give feedback to customer service agents and their management about areas to improve and where they excel. So yes, someone really does listen! Calling in to customer service or tech support is never how you want to spend your day, but there are a few things that you can do to help make sure the person you're talking to gives you the best service they can. So here are a few tips to make your next call go as smoothly as possible.

1 – Don't skip the automated voice or you will need to be prepared to be transferred. No one likes to navigate all the options the automated system gives you, and the voice recognition can be frustrating, but giving it as much information as you can rather than just skipping it can make your call shorter and better. It will get you to a department you need, or where there is an account matching information you provide, and it will often (but not always) auto-load that information for the person who answers your call. If you do skip it, be patient with the person who answers and understand that they may have to transfer you – be clear about what department you need or what services you have, so as to waste as little time and save as much bother as possible.

2 – Know your information, and give what is asked. You may want to go straight into telling your agent what the problem is, or vent about how long it has been happening, but there are a few things the agent must do before they can really help, the most important of which is to find your account. If the person is asking only for your name or security question, then they probably have your account loaded up thanks to you taking time with the Interactive Voice Recognition system (IVR) or the robot as we call it, but they need to confirm it's right before they can start making changes or troubleshooting. If they ask for your account number, let them know if you don't have it, and ask what other information they can use to find you. If you have phone or email services with the company you're calling, that's what they would normally use to contact you; that's probably the information they need.

3 – Be patient and try not to ramble. You may hear long periods of silence, or the phrase "I am just running some tests" which is a favorite in the tech support calls. It can be hard to wait this out, if you are the customer, when you're mad that it's the 2nd time your internet has gone out today. But this time is when your support agent is checking your account, letting their system check for damage in the area or other reported problems, and when they are figuring out what steps to do next. If silence goes on for longer than a minute, feel free to ask for an update, but if you are talking the entire time it will be harder for the agent to concentrate on their job.

4 – Leave honest feedback, good or bad. You might be offered a supervisor or ask to speak to one, or you might get a survey email or text after your call. This data is crucial for the company to figure out if there are patterns of good or bad service, and figure out how to give you more of what you like. Ratings of your satisfaction with the result, the wait time, and the service are good points of reference for the company and service as a whole. If you have the option for a short-answer or a free response, that is the best place to give your specific thoughts about the agent you worked with rather than the company as a whole, that section usually goes to the agent's supervisor and is a big part of how they are evaluated.

The Fun of Using Voice-Controlled Speakers

Jim Cerny, Forum Leader, Sarasota Technology User's Group, FL
www.thestug.org; jimcerny123 (at) gmail.com

There are some new devices out there called "voice activated speakers" and they appeal to many people. The two which seem to be the most popular right now are the "Echo Dot" and "Google Home" (pictured) but there are others. Most of them are in the price range of $50 to $150 (some higher) and they can be very fun to use – a great toy for people of all ages. You could think of this device as an audio (sound, music, voice) web-browser! Yes, you talk to it – you tell it what you want to hear, ask a question, or anything else you can think of. These devices listen to your verbal commands and will try to do whatever you want. This device uses your Wi-Fi connection to access the internet. Since the device is a speaker, your answers are audio, not video.

Voice recognition has been around for several years now, on my iPhone it is called "Siri" and on my Windows computer, it is called "Cortana". We recently bought an "Echo Dot" which has a voice named "Alexa" (about $50) and have been enjoying it (her) very much. I believe the trick to enjoying a device like this is to TRY it – ask it lots of questions and learn what it can do and what it cannot. Open your mind, don't limit your thinking to just asking for music, although music is certainly a good way to begin enjoying your smart speaker.

Here are some things you can try to ask your speaker:
• What is the weather like in Chicago?
• What is 5,283 times 7?
• Tell me about Lady Gaga.
• What is on my calendar today?
• Play some Perry Como hits.
What is the address of Gecko's in Sarasota?

Sometimes it is hard to find a good fun "toy" for someone and these smart speakers can be fun for anyone – from tots to seniors. If you are interested, why not ask someone who has one and try asking it some questions. I think you will be pleasantly surprised!

CCCLEANER URGENT NOTICE FROM
John Kennedy Regional 6 Advisor

CCleaner version 5.33 was compromised with malware. Please check to see which version of CCleaner you have on your computer.

Open CCleaner and you will find the version number in the upper left corner on the title bar.

If you have the compromised version, update to the current version.

From Bleeping Computer: Version 5.33 of the CCleaner app offered for download between August 15 and September 12 was modified to include the Floxif malware, according to a report published by Cisco Talos a few minutes ago. Updating to recent versions removes malware.

Floxif is a malware downloader that gathers information about infected systems and sends it back to its C&C server. The malware also had the ability to download and run other binaries, but at the time of writing (9/18), there is no evidence that Floxif downloaded additional second-stage payloads on infected hosts.

The malware collected information such as computer name, a list of installed software, a list of running processes, MAC addresses for the first three network interfaces, and unique IDs to identify each computer in part. Researchers noted that the malware only ran on 32-bit systems. The malware also quit execution if the user was not using an administrator account."

Avast recently bought Piriform – below from Avast CTO:

"In an email to Bleeping Computer, Avast CTO Ondrej Vlcek said that updating CCleaner to the most recent recent versions fixes any issues, as "the only malware to remove is the one embedded in the CCleaner binary itself.

The affected software (CCleaner v5.33.6162 and CCleaner Cloud v1.07.3191) has been installed on 2.27M machines from its inception up until now," Vlcek also added. "We believe that these users are safe now as our investigation indicates we were able to disarm the threat before it was able to do any harm."

"There is no indication or evidence that any additional "malware" has been delivered through the backdoor," Vlcek added.

Streaming TV
(continued from Page 6)

Streaming allows you to watch television shows and movies without having a cable or satellite subscription. You can use streaming to augment a basic cable or satellite TV subscription or to eliminate cable or satellite subscriptions completely making it a valuable tool for TV watching.

Also, Netflix and Amazon are now producing their own programming, much of which, like House of Cards, as become very popular. With streaming you can also watch a wide variety of movies and the past episodes of many different TV shows.

Even if you are not technically inclined, you will find that streaming is quite simple to setup. Here's what you need.

First -- a HDTV with a HDMI port. While older analog TVs can also be set up to stream, having an HDMI port make it much easier. All HDTVs, which include most newer TVs have these ports. To find them look at the back of the TV, they are usually labeled HDMI.

Second – You need a good broadband Internet connection. This is how the data (movies) will get to your television. The faster the better and you might want to upgrade your Internet, but you may not have to. Try it with the connection you have right now. You might be pleasantly surprised.

Third -- you need a streaming media device. Some newer TVs and most Blu-ray players can access the Internet. If you have one of these you can use it as your media streaming device.

If you don't have one of these, you will need to purchase a new device. The good news is that these devices are small and inexpensive. These devices include Chromecast, Roku, and Amazon Fire TV and Fire Stick. They range in price from $30 to $100. I have tried them all and they all work quite well. If you already belong to Amazon Prime, an Amazon Fire might be the best choice. To get the best selection of content, Roku is the best. In any case, the main difference in price is often whether the device comes with a remote control or not. If it doesn't come with a remote, like the Chromecast, you will have to use a tablet or mobile phone to control it. If that doesn't appeal to you, opt for one with a remote.

Fourth -- you will need a wireless router. Although some devices can hook up directly to your wired Internet router, in most cases your television is not in the same room as the Internet connection making it necessary to have a wireless router to transmit the data wirelessly to your television. If you already have wireless in your home for a tablet or phone, you are all set.

When you get your streaming media device home, you simply plug it into the TV. Set the TV to the proper input like HDMI 1 or HDMI 2, then follow the set up instructions that will appear on the screen. All are easy to follow. The only thing you will need is to know the password for you wireless network if it is password protected.

After the setup you will see your choices of things to watch. Some of these will be free, some will have extra costs. For instance Netflix and Hulu both have a ton of content, but each charges about $10 a month. Fortunately both have free trials which you can use.

Watching streaming media on your TV is not as simple as watching cable TV. There are little inconveniences. Every time you want to switch to your streaming device, you have to change the input on your television. Also there is no simple guide as the one you get with cable or satellite TV. You often have to search for want you want to watch. The Amazon Fire TV (not the Fire Stick) makes this easier because its remote has a voice search which works quite well. Just speak the name of a movie, actor, or director and it will find the movie you want. This, however, only works for Amazon Prime movies and shows. Also, if you have more than one subscription, you have to remember which movies are on which service….Now was Orange is the New Black on Netflix, Hulu, or Amazon?

Yet, the inconveniences are minor and there are advantages. For instance, after I started streaming I was able to watch the entire series of Downton Abbey on Amazon and House of Cards on Netflix at my convenience. How wonderful to watch a few episodes a week until I got caught up!

If you haven't yet tried streaming, be sure to check it out. You may find a new way of watching television that can save you money and give you new options.

>Users.news<

September, 2017

Northeast Wisconsin
Personal Computer User Group
Sharon Wichman, President
W7528 Kirschner Road
Shiocton, WI 54170

Northeast Wisconsin (NEW)
Personal Computer Users Group Newsletter
Find us at
http://newpcug.apcug.org

Northeast Wisconsin
PC User Group

Officers

President
Sharon Wichman
swichman@charter.net
(920) 968-5042

Vice President
Robert Quella

Product Review Editor
Tom Ekvall

Secretary/Treasurer/Membership
Nan MacDonald
macduks@att.net
(920) 231-6673 (home)

Newsletter Editor
Tom Ekvall

Membership Information and Disclaimer

DISCLAIMER

No warranty, expressed or implied , is made by NEW Personal Users Group or Fox Valley Technical College, the newsletter editorial staff, or any of the individual authors or contributors. The disclaimer extends to all losses, incidental or consequential from the use of this publication. Unless specifically stated otherwise, the opinions expressed in any article or column are those of the individual authors and do not represent any official position of or endorsement by NEW PCUG.

NEW PCUG is an independent , not-for-profit user group and is not affiliated in any way with any vendor or equipment or software manufacturer.

Membership, Dues And Renewals

All personal computer users in the Valley are invited to join the Northeast Wisconsin Personal Users Group. Membership entitles you to the monthly newsletter, special discounts, and more.

Annual dues are $15 for single person memberships and $20 for family memberships. You may pay your dues at the meeting or by mail to Nan MacDonald, 2440 Parkside Drive, Oshkosh, WI 54901. Her email address is macduks@att.net.

Members are reminded to renew their annual memberships as above.

Date of renewal is November of each year.