



Computer Care

We Make House Calls!

Since 1991

2009 EOY Edition

(413) 348-3289

computercare@comcast.net

www.wemakehousecalls.biz

Here it is mid-December 2009 already. Another year has vanished before our eyes. My son does not believe me when I tell him that time goes by very quickly. I find it difficult to believe that on February 1, 2010, 19 years will have passed since I started Computer Care!

Jake is a freshman in high school already. He will be part of the LHS class of 2013! Many of you remember when he used to accompany me on service calls, first as a toddler to a young man and now to a teen.

If you think back to 1991, what were computers like back then? Do you remember? The off white, ugly computer towers, floppy drives, 80 to 120 MEG, yes MEG hard drives. The first CD drives had just started appearing in computers too. These were read only, no burning—yet. And, of course the Windows 3.1 add on to MS DOS.

Jump forward and we have black and silver colored “stylish” computer towers, 160 Gig to 1 Terabyte hard drives, hundreds of times larger than those old hard drives from 1991! Floppy drives are a rarity as most of us carry 8 gig or larger flash drives in our pockets. That’s equal to over 5500 floppy disks! Plus lots of other advances in speed, operating systems and features. But the big question is, as we go forward another 19 years, what will that bring? Will you even remember the latest Windows 7,

Face book, high speed internet, Blue Ray (BD), and other programs and technological items we are now adopting?

So what are the goodies that you might want today or this coming year? Windows 7 is the biggie. A better upgrade than what Windows Vista has become. If you are unhappy with Vista or find it slow, then I highly suggest upgrading to Windows 7. You will like it. W7 as it’s also called is more streamlined, less glitz, with a more common sense look and feel to it. Everyone seems to like it and you will too. The upgrade from Vista Premium to W7 Premium is \$119 plus time to install it. Or start with a new computer with W7 on it.

If you didn’t realize it, Computer Care *sells* computers too. We’ll discuss with you how you’ll use your computer now and into the future and suggest one or more models that will let you *grow* into them. All computers we sell, we “prep” that is check out and customize *before* delivering them to you. We also help to migrate your old data and programs onto the new computer. We’re also here for you to answer questions or show you how to do something. We’re just a **local** phone call away. YOU won’t have to deal with those foreigners with their difficult to understand English. You deal with us and if needed we’ll deal with them! Give us a call or email and we’ll find the best com-

puter for you!

The same goes for accessories and peripherals. We can find the best monitor, printer, multifunction device, scanner, backup drive and software and more. All you need to do is ask. We’ll be happy to help you! :)

You want a notebook? Wait, maybe you want a netbook? Darn, what’s the difference? Will a inexpensive netbook do everything I want to do or should I invest more and get a notebook? There is lots of confusion here and we can help you decide.

Recently a new generation of Netbooks came out. These have larger screens. Instead of the original 8.9 inch screens, the new ones are 10.1 to 11.6 inches and are much brighter than the originals too. But buyer beware, inexpensive Netbooks may not have a Windows operating system. You may be stuck with Linux or Google Android which is pretty different than Windows. Netbooks are great for casual travelers who don’t need power, aren’t going to run multiple programs at once, who don’t need a cd or dvd reader or burner. Netbooks are great for travelers or home users that need email and internet. They can do more, but have the processing power of a computer from 8 to 10 years ago. They aren’t speedy, but they get the job done. Contact us for more information.

What are some programs that will make managing your computer easier? I’ve been using a number of new or new to me programs this year. Here are a few of them:

Adobe Air and Air programs. Go to www.adobe.com and click the “Get Adobe Air” button on the right. Download and install it. Then go to “Get Air Applications” - many are free. Click the “Most Popular” tab and press the right arrow button to scroll thru them 6 at a

time. When you get to Accuweather, click it then click the orange bar that says download from publisher. Then install when asked. This will install the weather in a floating opaque box any where on screen you want it. If you hover the mouse over it, you can click the “cog” icon and set your desired town. The weather is visible at all times on your desktop. No sidebar or other needed. It works great and you can also see the weather for 5 days at a time. There are other free and pay programs made especially for Adobe Air that you can download and install yourself.

Have you finally conceded to the fact that you have too many icons on your desktop? Or you just can’t seem to keep your desktop organized? Now there is a small and simple program to help you organize your desktop. It’s called “Fences”. Fences creates little windows where you can add a title or category description and drop the program icons to keep them better organized. I’ve been using it for months now and it’s great! You can download it from: <http://www.stardock.com/products/fences/>

Do you have multiple computers and want to keep your favorites and bookmarks synchronized between them all? Then Xmarks is for you. Xmarks is a free program that will synchronize your favorites/bookmarks between your laptop and desktop or any two or more computers. You can sync between Internet Explorer, Firefox, Chrome and Safari simply and easily. Go to: <http://www.xmarks.com/> to learn more.

I’ve also become a big fan of Slacker online radio. There is a free version, which I use and a pay version with more features. You can go to: <http://www.slacker.com/> and create a free account and start using it immediately.

My account spans online listening as well as on my Blackberry and Ipod touch (when I have wifi). Slacker excels when you want to listen to a type of music. For example, now it's Hanukah and I want to listen to Klezmer music which is a Jewish, clarinet based type of music. I can search Klezmer and Slacker will find all the channels that are Klezmer and similar and start playing them. I can set certain ones I like as a favorite.

Another music based online is Wolfgang's Vault. (www.wolfgangsvault.com) This is a site to listen to older concerts from the 1950's to the late 90's. Just create a free account and start listening. You can also purchase concert related posters, t-shirts, passes and more on the online store.

Here you are listening to a concert on Wolfgang's Vault. You've created yet another user name and password. Are you able to remember it in your head? Do you have sticky notes plastered all over your computer and monitor? Maybe notes on a sheet of paper? Of do you forget login information for many sites? There's a simple and very non-technical, non-computer way to keep track of all your user names, passwords and pertinent info for that web site. You need a Internet Password Organizer. I looked thru a whole bunch of them and came up with one standout. It's the perfect size, holds all the right information, is spiral bound and costs just \$20 at Amazon.com And yes, it's called the "Internet Password Organizer by Innovention Lab". It's worth every penny and I highly recommend purchasing one for every computer user in your house. It's set up just like an old fashioned address book with tabs for letters, multiple entries per page. It's easy to find and store all your important infor-

mation. Here's the web link: <http://www.wolfgangsvault.com/gregg-allman-band/concerts/auditorium-shores-may-25-1987.html>

Are you getting tired of paying the high prices for ink for your inkjet printer? Maybe you don't print that much and they dry out or more likely you print a fair amount and buy new ink often. It does get expensive pretty quickly. Maybe it's time to start thinking about a new color printer? Color laser printers have come way, way down from where they were just a few years ago. You can now get excellent black and color print on a color laser for less than \$500. This used to cost over \$2000 just a few years ago!

The advantage of color laser is no smudging as it comes out dry right away, lower cost per print vs inkjet, faster print speed for single and multiple pages, more pages per cartridge than inkjet. It's something to consider, especially if you are not printing high end photographs but still want color in your documents and pictures. A color laser is much more efficient and cost worthy over time and you'll be spoiled before you know it.

Or, if you only print documents in black or a majority only in black, then go to a mono laser printer. Cost per page is so cheap compared to ink jet, all the same benefits as a color laser too. Even a small, home laser will give you 1500 or more pages from a cartridge. That's a lot of ink cartridge purchases which means laser is about one half or less as expensive as ink—and it doesn't dry out over time. Contact Computer Care to learn more.

Providing you with the best possible service is very important to me. I work very hard to keep up to date with my phone messages and emails and try to schedule appoint-

ments as quickly as possible. When I have something that needs service, I expect the same treatment from whomever I hire for the job. Where possible, I *always* hire a small business person instead of going to big business or one of the giant box stores.

I belong to a group of similar minded professionals who share the same work ethic that I do. The group is called EBBE or Extending Business Beyond Expectations—yes a mouthful. I have used many of the services provided by members of the group and *highly* suggest them to you as well. You will not be disappointed. They ALL do excellent work!

You can find out more at the blog for the group at ebbegroup.wordpress.com and click on members or call/email me for more information. We all provide a wide variety of services from car repair, painters, personal car shopper and many more. Check it out!

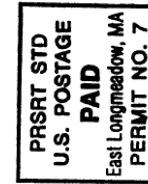
If you want to read up on interesting tidbits, learn how to use Google maps better, read my past newsletters or catch up with my families summer adventures explore the newsletter section of my web site at: www.wemakehousecalls.biz.

A reminder that my old office number of 413-567-3505 is no longer in use and has been disconnected. Please call Computer Care at the cell number:

(413) 348-3289

Happy Holidays and have a very Happy and Healthy New Year! Thank you all for your continued business and for referring your friends to me!

Larry Krainson



Computer Care
100 Kenmore Drive
Longmeadow, MA 01106-2759