



**Computer
Care**

We Make House Calls!

Since 1991 2011 Spring Edition

(413) 348-3289

computercare@comcast.net
www.wemakehousecalls.biz

It's hard to believe that another year has gone by. It's now February 2011 and Computer Care is celebrating its 20th anniversary! Unbelievable! I've met so many wonderful people, many of which are still around but unfortunately some have passed away.

Many things have happened during those wonderful 20 years. The biggest of all is the arrival of Jacob. It seems like just a few months ago when Faye and I were planning our trip to Russia to get Jacob. On March 2, it will be 15 years! Now he is 15, a sophomore in high school and is active in sports, Boy Scouts and so much more. So many of you remember the little baby that used to come on service calls with me, now he's a strapping young man.

Through the years the technology of computers has changed so much. Back then it was the beginnings of windows and the end of DOS. Now it's Windows 7 and phones smarter and faster than computers from just a few years ago! It's still advancing at an amazing rate too. The next 20 years should be just as amazing as the past 20!

In the past year we've made some changes, The old 413-567-3505 number was shut down back in December of 2009. Now all calls go to (413) 348-3289.

Not only is my cell phone taking all

calls, but it also has all my contacts, addresses and notes. As of today, there are over 1000 contacts and the list grows daily. Also, with a tap, my calendar is accessible and my notes, email and texting too.

So what do I use for a phone? It's a Android phone with a touch screen on the Verizon Wireless service. Android is the operating system for the phone, just like Windows is for your computer. You've probably seen the logo every where and on TV. The phone is basically a small computer with advanced phone features. Along with the basics that I use as mentioned above, there are programs that can be downloaded from the Android Market Place. Some are free, some are not. To use the Android phone in the first place, you must subscribe to a data plan. Mine adds \$30 per month to my cell phone expenses. But once you get used to it and all the features at your fingertips, you wonder how you got along with out it all these years! Plus nearly all smart phones have a built in GPS and mapping programs with voice prompts, voice commands, wifi and much more. You'll be amazed!

Some extra programs that I have downloaded and use are: Google Sky—hold the



phone up to the sky and it'll tell you the stars and constellations and planets that you see. Weather Bug—know what the weather is wherever you are. It uses the built in GPS to change locations and updates constantly. Facebook—take pictures with the built in 5 or larger megapixel camera, email, text or post to Facebook instantly! Banking, internet, music online, music playing (like a ipod/mp3 player), games, news, you name it!

If you'd like to learn more, or need help learning shortcuts and how to use your existing Android phone or tablet or how to transfer your calendar and contacts to your new phone, contact Computer Care and we'll set up an appointment for you.



One of the advantages of the Android phone is it uses a google/gmail account. With that, I can log onto any computer and use my email, update my calendar, manage my contacts and more. The world is at my fingertips and it's all connected thru Google whether by phone, computer or any wireless device. It's a pretty amazing device and millions of people are using them now.

The computer may be getting a run for its money from smart phones, but I wouldn't give up my big screen and keyboard for the smart phone any days now. I prefer to type and schedule and enter data with a keyboard. The phone is great while I'm on the go, but not for back in the office or home.

How old is your computer now? With time passing so quickly, your computer may be 4,5 or more years old? Have you noticed it getting slower or maybe you're running out of

room on your hard drive? Or maybe it's starting to make some unusual noises? Maybe it's time to start thinking about a replacement computer for the one on your desk now?

Computer Care DOES sell computers.

We get asked that every week. Many of you have bought computers from us thru the years that are still running. We take pride in selling you a machine that will last. Something that not only solves the problem you're having right now, but also gives you room to grow into the future.

We used to custom build a lot of computers but now only build a few custom machines each year. We mainly research and sell you pre-built computers by Acer, HP Business, Lenovo Business and Panasonic for which we are an authorized reseller for and their sub brands such as Acer Gateway, Acer eMachines, HP Compaq. We've been selling Acer for many years and in the last few years have become HP and Lenovo Business Authorized Dealer.



What Lenovo and HP Business offer are work-horse type machines of which some have standard 3 year warranties. Most come with one year and you can add an additional 2 years as an option too and can do with Acer as well.

For the first time in 19 years of business, on purchases over \$600,



we are now accepting credit cards. This has

become a reality thru a new gizmo that attaches to my smart phone.

One tool that makes it easier to support everyone is the use of remote control. This means I can sit at my computer and remotely control your computer through a high speed internet connection. This can be a very handy time saver especially for those of you that are snow birds and may need help from your winter locations. Contact me for more information.

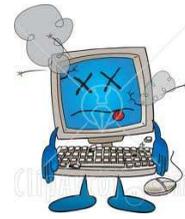
One thing that I constantly remind people of is the need to backup their data. This data may be business documents and files but may also be valuable digital photographs, music, address books, email more.

A common piece of hardware is the external hard drive. This drive plugs into a available usb port. Once the drive is recognized by the computer, you can simply copy data over to it. But what do you do if you have a lot of data? You need either a synchronization program or a backup program or both. Windows usually does not come standard with one. To learn more, please contact Computer Care.

The DVD has become a very reliable place to back data up to. DVDs are just 4.7 gigs, it's still a great idea to back up pictures and data to them. I highly suggest when you download the pictures to your computer, you then burn a DVD with the pictures and mark it as such and put it a safe place.

All too often I hear "Why do I need a backup drive or plan if my computer is working". Having a backup device in place and running will give you peace of mind should your computer die suddenly without warning. Plan

ahead so data loss does not happen to you!



Each year passwords get longer and longer and more complex. Are you keeping a record of them? You are, how? The little black book I suggested last year (<http://www.wemakehousecalls.biz/newsletters.html>) is still one of the best ways and still VERY important these days. As hackers get more bold and break into institutions that we all thought safe, then your passwords are more important than ever.

The MOST common mistake is using the same password everywhere. Nearly everyone I know does that. You need to start changing your ways. When those places are hacked and your personal data is acquired by the bad guys, they'll have your password and use name. Start taking the time to change them and make them more difficult. By recording them in your book, you may not remember them and need to look them up more often, but your personal data will be much safer!

A really good password consists of upper and lower case letters, a few numbers and some punctuation. Pretty soon more places will require this, so why wait, start now and use more variations to protect yourself!

All computers come with some sort of security program. This can be a antivirus or security suite. It's very important to be running at least an anti virus with anti Spyware protection and that it is kept up to date. Expired security software is the fastest way to compromise your computer and the data. Are you unsure? Contact us and we'll come take a

look at it and correct any deficiencies.

In each newsletter I have always included some handy programs for you to use and this year is no different except you have to surf over to my web site's newsletter section and read the "Useful Programs—Dec 2010" adobe .pdf file. Just click it and it will open in your browser. You can click the active links or print it for future use. I use all the programs and they are very useful.

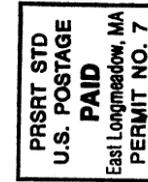
For the 20th anniversary of Computer Care, I am offering a \$10 discount off my hourly rate for the first hour of work for all existing customers (home and business). This is not available for new clients, just all of you that have kept us busy through the years. It can only be used once and will expire on 12/31/2011 and you MUST show me this newsletter when you request it.

Most of us are working our way through this economy the best way we can. But do you support local small businesses? You help to support Computer Care, otherwise you wouldn't be reading this. But how about other small businesses?

If you are looking for other exceptionally reliable and LOCAL small businesses, then point your browser to: www.ebbegroup.com and click on "our members". I've used most of them and they are wonderful. You should too!

I'd like to thank you all for your continued support and wish everyone the best 2011 has to offer! Hopefully I'll see you during the year!

Larry Krainson



Computer Care
100 Kenmore Drive
Longmeadow, MA 01106-2759