



# Computer Care

## Chronicles

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*Year 14 - Winter 2006*

**Holiday Greetings to All!** Isn't it amazing how fast 2005 went by? As a family we had a tremendous year, especially the summer. We spent as much time as possible camping in our new little popup camper, kayaking, hiking and exploring new places. Even Fuzzy our dog went kayaking and camping with us. He was very happy. It was great. You can read about our summer adventure at: [www.wemakehousecalls.biz](http://www.wemakehousecalls.biz) and click on either Newsletters or About Us and read the Summer 2005 Camping and Vacation Adventure link. It will open a Acrobat reader pdf file including pictures and web links.

**Kayaking** has become a passion of mine. I couldn't get enough time out on the water. Whether it be in a lake or river, it was always a relaxing and fun experience. It is always exciting to see animals up close in their own habitat. We saw beavers, turtles, lots of different birds and even a few eagles. I even saw a seagull dive into the water and come up with a live crab in its beak. It was very cool! We did get a few good photographs (with my digital camera) of an immature eagle eating a fish on a small island in the CT river between Hatfield and Sunderland as well as many other sights seen from our little boat. It was a magnificent sight. One that I hope to repeat many times in coming years.

I have a dry bag that I keep my digital camera (and other stuff in) while in my kayak. So when I see something interesting, out comes the camera and a new picture gets added to my collection.

It's easy to get spoiled by using a **digital camera** instead of a film camera. For example,

so far in 2005, I have taken a bit over 2800 pictures. Admittedly if I was using film it would be only a fraction of that. But the freedom of being able to re-use the media to take the pictures makes it easy and fun. In film, that's 116+ rolls of film. Figuring roughly \$10 per roll including developing, that's \$1160 spent just on film. Now, for a really good 5 megapixel camera with a good optical zoom (12x) and one or two 1 gig memory cards you could spend about half that. I have just that camera and sell it too. It's a **Panasonic FZ-5**. Tech specs are 5meg, 12x optical (28-434mm equivalent), rechargeable battery, 1 gig SD memory card. At its highest resolution, I can take 200 pictures. If I reduce the resolution a little bit, that memory card will hold 400 or more pictures. And, it's reusable! The FZ-5 got rave reviews from the digital camera review web sites. Most used it as a benchmark at which to compare other digital cameras against. There is a digital camera out there for everyone, we can find the one that is perfect for you. Contact me for more information.

But wait, what do you do with all the pictures, you may ask? Well, they can be set up as a screen saver or desktop wallpaper, printed as a photograph, emailed, etc. But wouldn't you like to do something more with your pictures?

Epson came out with a revolutionary product late this summer called the Storyteller. I think it is the **product of the year**, that's how good it is! Storyteller is a software, paper and more package. Install the software, import the pictures you want to use, arrange them in the

format you like, put descriptions under them and save the format. Then print it on the included glossy photo paper by following the directions in the manual. Once done printing, you can bind the pages in the included hard cover binder and make your own photo album. It's all very simple, the manual is in easy english, descriptions for printing on Epson, Canon, HP and Lexmark printers are in the instructions.

The outcome is a **beautiful photo album** suitable for placing on your coffee table or giving as a gift. Your friends and relatives will never believe that you made it yourself! I have the first one I did to show you how great it looks. I also always carry two sizes of the Storyteller; 8x10 20 pages and 5x7 10 pages. They have been selling like crazy and I have been keeping them in stock. If you own a digital camera, you definitely want to be creating your own photo album.

Do you have a lot of names/contacts in your cell phone? Are you worried that if your phone dies or is lost, that you'll have to re-enter all that information?

I'm using a program called **Datapilot** which includes a usb cable. I use it to back up my contacts from my cell phone. I also use it to add my pictures easily, change tunes, enter new contacts and more to my cell phone.

Not only did I easily import all my contacts from my old, defunct cell phone, but have taken some of my digital pictures and added them to my phone as well. It's easy to customize the data. You can also add contacts and then save them to the phone. It's much easier to do it this way than to enter on the tiny keyboard of the cell phone. If you want to learn more, drop me an email or phone call.

When was the last time you backed up the data on your hard drive? Have you reached a point where backing up onto cd's takes too long or uses too many cd's? If so, then it's time for a **external hard drive** to easily backup your data, photographs, music or nearly anything. There are many different sizes available from

40 gigs to 1.5 terrabytes (huge!). The drives simply plug into a usb port and are recognized by Windows XP as another hard drive. You can copy the data directly to the external drive or use a program to do it for you. Using a program simplifies the issue as you just click on the "backup set" and let it do the work. When you return, the back-up will be done. Everyone who owns a computer should have their data backed up. You can't expect your computer to last forever, so when it does crash, so does your data.

Have you noticed that your computer is getting slow? Or maybe the hard drive is nearly full? Or you'd like to be able to work more efficiently or quickly? Maybe you just can't run all the protection software that is needed today? Every computer should be running an up to date anti-virus program, an anti-spyware program, a firewall, pop-up blocker, anti-phishing software and an anti-spam program. Is it time for a new computer?

**One of the things that Computer Care does is build computers for personal and small business use.** You want a computer that you can grow into, not something that merely fixes the immediate problem with your old computer. You want a computer that gives you room to expand as you need it, a computer built just for you. A quality machine. **You want great support too.** You don't want to spend hours on hold waiting for someone with an impossible to understand accent, who doesn't listen to your issue, who speaks condescending to you, do you?

You should have Computer Care build your next computer. We'll listen to how you are going to use it; now and in the future and make a recommendation based on that information. Why go to dell, gateway or all the others and deal with their issues? Yes, you may pay a bit less, but you have to deal with the person in india when there is a problem. Or have to wait a very long time to get your unit repaired? Or maybe have a part shipped to your doorstep and then need someone to install it properly for you? Computer Care eliminates all that by making

house calls and doing the work at your site.

I have a article in front of me that states "dell's dilemma - quality issues plague direct giant". Why deal with that? **Contact Computer Care to have a computer custom built just for you.** We also deal with Acer and other laptops/notebooks. Why buy an inferior product and deal with quality issues too? Let us provide you with a portable computer that will work for you.

What **new technologies** have become available in the past 12 months? Probably the most anticipated is the Dual-Core processor. Dual-Core is two cpu cores in one cpu chip. Two cpu's means much faster processing of graphic intensive game animation or anything that is cpu intensive for speed. Large graphics is one such use besides gaming. Plus, the use of 64 bit processing vs todays 32 bit. Speed is the big gain here for operating systems and applications that support it. Both Intel and AMD have dual-core processors out now. AMD, the underdog, currently has the fastest cpu running at 2.4 Ghz, but it gives you the performance of a Intel chip running at 4800+ Ghz. So AMD named it the 4800+.

Of course video, memory, system bus and hard drives are faster to work with the faster processors. You benefit by it and like every year, speed is increasing by amazing amounts every 12 to 18 months.

I've recently changed my start page from news.google.com to [www.massmoments.com](http://www.massmoments.com). Google news is still a favorite of mine, but Mass Moments is something simpler and usually more interesting. It changes every day and depicts something interesting that has happened in Massachusetts history. Sometimes it's so interesting, I google more info on the subject just to learn more.

I'm also always interested in the weather, especially when it's really hot or cold or a storms brewing. So I like to have the weather in my system tray always showing the temperature and updating. Weatherbug and others are good, but I like to have the info

displayed to me without any advertising. So I use a program called Weather Watcher. You can download WW for free at [www.singerscreations.com](http://www.singerscreations.com) and click on weather watcher 5.6.2 (or higher). It's a really good program that provides just the info that you want. It updates when ever you are online. You can customize it for your town.

If you use Internet Explorer as your web browser, you want to add a anti-phishing toolbar. Go to [www.netcraft.com](http://www.netcraft.com) and click on the free netcraft toolbar. The toolbar prevents **phishing**, which is another threat on the internet. Basically hackers are "fishing" for access to your personal information. The toolbar prevents that "phishing" from happening. There is a tutorial and frequently asked questions which will provide more information for you. It's worthwhile reading.

My favorite program that I've downloaded is a substitute for Internet Explorer. It's called **Maxthon** and is available at [www.maxthon.com](http://www.maxthon.com). It works very much like IE, but it gives you tabbed browsing. So, in IE, you'd have to open 5 IE windows to view 5 web sites. In Maxthon, you open 5 tabs. clicking between them is simple and easy. Also, you can save the open tab sites as a group. So if you're comparing cars and have 9 windows open, you can save all 9 tabs as a group called car shopping. Then, re-opening them another day is easy. Start Maxthon, click groups and select car shopping. They all open and refresh. You can not currently do anything like this in IE.

So at any given moment, I may have a bunch of tabs open. I may have some cub scout trip or camping ideas, be doing research for a customer, be looking at gift ideas and more for my self and be able to click between them quickly and easily. It's a great tool.

**Local service** is something that many of us specialize in. We all take pride in our work and we work very hard and work long hours (just ask my wife) to solve or fix your problems. People are always asking me if I know a good someone for this or that, and

usually I do.

In the past few years I've joined a small business networking group. There's a group of 20 or so of us that **provide local, hands-on, personal service in the area.** If you are looking for a web designer, photographer, lawyer, realtor, handyman or many other services, point your web browser to [www.ebbegroup.com](http://www.ebbegroup.com) and click on the "Our Members" link. There you will find all the above services and much more. They have all become friends of mine and I know I can reliably refer you to them, knowing you will get excellent service. They work just as hard as I do to make your life simpler.

### Contact Info

**Office: (413) 567-3505 - this is often forwarded to my cell phone to speed up my contacting you.**

**Cell Phone: (413) 348-3289**

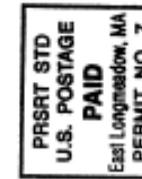
**Email: [computercare@comcast.net](mailto:computercare@comcast.net)**

### Thank You!

I owe you all a big thank you for making 2005 such a wonderful year! I appreciate your business very much and will continue to earn your business by keeping you happy in 2006 and future years.

**Have a Healthy and Happy Holiday Season!**

*Larry Krainson - Computer Care*



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*Return Service Requested*