

Nybbles & Bytes



www.neopc.org

January 2011

Voice: 216-521-2907

Elaine Szaniszló, Editor

January General Meeting

Wednesday, January 12, 2011
Westlake Porter Public Library
27333 Center Ridge Road

"2010 Income Tax Updates" by Ian Abbott.

Ian's talk will help in preparing Income Taxes. His talk on the latest income tax updates will help members in preparing their Income Tax 2010 returns.

Ian Abbott is the owner of Abacus Financial Services in Avon, OH, a wealth-building firm concentrating on tax and market beating active management for individuals and small businesses. Prior to starting his business in 1991, he was a broker/financial planner for Merrill Lynch, American Express, and spent a year working with the IRS.

Come and learn about the new tax law changes. The meeting opens at 6:30 pm with refreshments, and the program begins at 7:15 pm.

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FIND YOUR MOUSE CURSOR IN A FLASH (WinXP/Vista/7)

How many times have you walked up to your PC and had to spend the first few seconds jiggling the mouse in order to find the cursor? Spotting that tiny on-screen pointer can sometimes be tough—particularly on a large monitor (or if you have multiple monitors). But as it turns out, Win7, Vista and WinXP can save you a bit of time by letting you locate the cursor with a quick press of the CTRL key.

To turn on this feature, go to the Control Panel in WinXP (Classic View) and double-click the Mouse icon. In Vista/Win7, type **Mouse** in the Start menu Search field and press ENTER.

When the Mouse Properties window appears, click the Pointer Options tab, then under Visibility, put a check mark next to Show Location Of Pointer When I Press the CTRL key and click OK. Now, when you press CTRL, a circle will flash briefly to show you where the cursor is.

The **door prize** for the January meeting is Turbo Tax Basic for 2010 with E-file. This program guides you through your federal return step by step, asks easy to understand questions, and then inserts your responses on IRS approved forms. Year to year transfer feature automatically fills in information from previous year's Turbo Tax return. It also double-checks to make sure your return is accurate.



Todd Johnson could not attend our December 2010 meeting due to the winter storm. He is rescheduled to speak at our February 9 meeting. Mark your calendar and plan to attend.

THE PHOTOGRAPHER

By “San Diego Shooter”

As I look back on my life to the times that I’ve most rapidly learned new skills (including photography) it strikes me that in every instance the experience was ‘active’ rather than ‘passive.’

While I’ve certainly learned a lot of theory in different areas of life by reading books, listening to others speak and even by watching others do things – I’ve only actually acquired a new skill by practicing or putting into action what I learn.

By no means is learning bad – it often is a great foundation for taking action – but many photographers I meet have incredible knowledge of the theory of photography yet rarely take photos themselves.

As photographers we need to be willing to step out of ‘learning’ mode and into ‘doing’ mode.

- This starts with picking up your camera and taking it with you – everywhere.
- It continues with a commitment to regularly lifting that camera to your eye and taking shot after shot.
- It means sometimes stepping outside of one’s comfort zone and feeling a little awkward or self conscious to get the shot.
- It means a not being satisfied with the first shot but experimenting with new angles and fresh perspectives on subjects.

- It means not only knowing the ‘rules’ or principles of photography, but having a commitment to practice them (and break them).
- It means going beyond understanding the ‘specifications’ and ‘features’ of your camera and actually experimenting with using them.
- It means ‘thinking’ about your photography – planning shots, setting yourself challenges and then critically reflecting upon the photos you take to work out how you could improve.
- It sometimes means sharing your images – not simply to show how good you are and get ‘nice shot’ remarks – but in the hope that others will point out where you might improve.
- It means all of these things and more, but most of all it means picking up your camera and using it.

Good photographers are not all about ‘action’ – there is certainly a place for learning, reflection and a certain type of ‘passivity’ (or reflection) in photography – but if there’s one common thing I’ve noticed about great photographers over the years, it’s that they take photos.

I think it is time that some of us need to spend a little less time reading about photography and spend a little more time doing some photography!

(Article submitted by Jim Monica)

SHOP SAFELY ONLINE

Do you shop online? When you do, are you concerned that your credit card or other personal information will be viewed by all? Be sure to check the following. The best way to determine if you are "safe" is by making sure the address on the web browser shows "https." That means the site is secure (that's why the S). Note a regular browser address shows only http.

If a website asks for your credit card information, make sure the https is visible. If not, **do not** enter your credit card information or social security number, or any other personal identifying item.

(Information submitted by Jim McIntyre)

FORWARDING COURTESY

If you forward this email, please delete the "forwarding history", which includes my email address! It is a courtesy to me and others who may not wish to have their email addresses sent all over the world!

If you have Outlook Express you can add the above message to all your outgoing emails including forwards. This should eventually reach even the most difficult person who keeps your email address visible to all including "spammers."

Click on Tools> Options> Signatures.

Click on New. Click on Text and type the above message. Check the box titled add signatures to all outgoing messages. Uncheck the box titled Don't add signatures to replies and forwards.

Click Apply> OK.

Then either click on the following URL's or see the text following. Let's stop this simple emailing from getting into the hands of spammers.

<http://www.worldstart.com/tips/tips.php/609>

<http://www.worldstart.com/tips/tips.php/55>

Article submitted by Mike Volker and Jim McIntyre



END OF COMPUTER PRIVACY?

This just popped up on the Fox News website. The people interviewed and the interviewer are handling this like it's the next logical step in computer evolution. Perhaps it is. BUT, after considering how much the government is trying to control our lives these days, I can't help but think that it has finally figured out a way to monitor our individual computer usage once hard drives become obsolete because everything will be stored ONLINE, or "in the Cloud" as the technology is being called. Yes, we will still have memory chips but operating systems such as Google's new "Chrome" will be built around online storage. This sounds like scary stuff! Check out this link to Fox News Channel's posting on their website.

<http://www.foxnews.com/scitech/2010/12/09/death-hard-drive-cloud-google-chrome/>

Article submitted by Jim McIntyre

"EASY 10" contest - LOGIN TO BE A WINNER !!! ... NEOPC members only:

Contest #3 - 12/9 thru 1/12/2011 (noon) - When you LOGIN to the "Contest" page on our website to view the rules you are automatically entered into the contest. No further action is necessary. Do look around though while you are there and check out the FORUM as well.

HEWIE'S VIEWS & REVIEWS By Hewie Poplock, Central Florida Computer Society

REMOVE TIME STAMPS FROM PHOTOS, RENAME & CHANGE FILE DATE

I am the webmaster for several websites. I have photos submitted to me regularly to be posted. Sometimes the photographer submits the pictures with a date stamp, which is great for identifying your personal photos, but it does not belong on those appearing on the web.

In most cases, it only appears on the photo because the camera owner did not realize that it was set that way, or they did not know how or even that they could turn that "feature" off.

If you don't have the proper date set in the camera, the date stamp will be wrong, as were several that I recently received. They showed a date that was over 3 years prior to the event, so I needed to remove them from the photos. Have you tried this? It is not easy, unless you continue reading.

My first thought is to crop the photos to eliminate the date. Most of the photos would lose some important pieces if I did that. I have several photo editing programs that I could edit the date stamp out. It is very time consuming and while it can be done, it was going to take more time than I wanted to devote to the project.

My next step was to Google the problem. I tried several combinations of terms including time stamp. There were lots of results, but most had little to do with removing the date. Many of them told me how to place it, but not remove it.

The most informational results were from forums where users were asking for the same solution. The most frequent response was "change the setting in the camera." DUH! Of course. What about the pictures that were already taken? I did find some good tutorials using Photoshop and other editing programs. I was still looking for a tool or hint to make it easy. Surely, I wasn't the only one with the problem. I figured if there were simple steps to get rid of the red eye, certainly there is a way to get rid of a date stamp. In one of the forums, someone suggested Photo Stamp Remover by



<http://softorbits.com>. This program appeared to be what I was looking for, and then some. According to their website, "Photo Stamp Remover is a photo correction utility that can remove scratches, dust, stains, wrinkles, tears, date stamps and other unwanted artifacts that appear on photographs. With Photo Stamp Remover, you can restore photos with the minimum of fuss."

I downloaded, installed, and ran the program, using the pictures that I received. In almost every case, the date stamp was removed and did a reasonable to a great job. The trial version does not do batches, but the paid version does and it works well, with 2 settings, quick, or thorough. The latter did a better job.

The program is a bit pricey at \$40, but well worth it. A normal procedure for me is to search for coupons before making a purchase. I did so for this program and found a coupon at <http://www.tjoos.com> which is a coupon posting site. It was a 20% off code, which saved me \$8.

While removing the date stamp, I also wanted to change the file names and not use the ones that the camera uses. For that I use a tool that I wrote about in a previous column, Lupas Rename <http://rename.lupasfreeware.org> which is free. It is an old program going back to 2005, but it still installs and works on my Windows 7 computer. You can rename batches, changing, adding to, or numbering sequentially. You can change the case of the file filename and extension. I prefer to have my photos all in lower case.

However, Lupas Rename does not change the file date. I had all of these pictures with the wrong date. While there are ways to change file dates, there must be a tool to do this in a batch. Back to Google. I found Attribute Changer from <http://petges.lu> [4] which is a free tool

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IS THIS YOUR NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION?

Yes, it's that time of year when we make New Year's resolutions. Or have you given up that practice? I always aim to organize my stuff, and maybe this year I'll do it. If you are interested in attempting this task, here are some websites that may be helpful:

www.flylady.net

Marla Cilley's site focuses on preventing CHAOS (Can't Have Anyone Over Syndrome) through a simple task list.. For the organizing novice, the [FlyLady](http://www.flylady.net) provides baby steps each day of the month and establishes a routine that will keep your home guest-ready. More advanced organizers can tackle one zone of the home at a time using the weekly cleaning schedule found in the FLY Zone. Because disorganization isn't just a problem for women, questions regarding pesky repair issues and organization can be asked in the Hey Tom section, where the male perspective on fix-it issues is shared.

www.onlineorganizing.com

Clutter could cost you more than replacing a lost pair of shoes. [OnlineOrganizing.com](http://www.onlineorganizing.com)'s clutter calculator, found under the Do You Need Help? Tab, estimates the price of your disorganization each year. To reduce that annual cost, the Tip Of the Day, found at the top of the main page, and 15-minute Quick Fixes, located under Organizing Advice, help you start clearing clutter.

www.organizedhome.com

This is the site to help you dispose of that decades-old rock collection and stack of outdated magazines. Equipped with top-notch organization

tips. You will learn to say goodbye to unwanted clutter. The Cut Clutter tab will direct you to "Find Your Clutter Personality."

www.tips-to-organize-life.com

Getting organized requires more than an annual shuffle of misplaced items, which is why expert organizer and creator of this site, Tracy Alt, teaches ways to mentally and physically change habitual hoarding practices into clutter-clearing routines. With a focus on organizing multiple aspects of your life, such as yourself, finances, and family, the site provides a plethora of tips and tactics that are enough to put any clutter bug on the right organization path.

www.organizingyourway.net

Keeping your home clutter free will add beauty to any room, but to give your organized home an even more pleasant appearance, the Decorating To Declutter portion of the site, located in the Categories section, provides easy ways to turn frequently used items, such as books, into decorations.

www.clutterdietblog.com

This blog (founded in 2006) is about more than cleaning a room. It's about changing lifestyles. The author explains that procrastination is the largest barrier to becoming clutter-free, and overcoming that procrastination will be easier if you have a motivation partner.

DEFINITION OF THE MONTH:

CD-RW: CD-ReWritable disk, a type of CD disk that enables you to write onto it in multiple sessions. With CD-RW drives and disks, you can treat the optical disk just like a floppy or hard disk, writing data onto it multiple times.

COMING EVENTS—JANUARY—EARLY FEBRUARY 2011

01/04	Senior Center Class - 10:00 am - "601 - File Management" - 20769 Lorain Rd. - Class auditing by visitors is acceptable.
01/05	Facebook SIG Meeting! For anyone who wants to learn about using Facebook. Meeting the first Wednesday of the month 10am to 11:30am at the Fairview Park Branch of the Cuyahoga County Public Library downstairs in meeting room A.
01/12	Northeast Ohio PC Club (NEOPC) General Meeting held at Westlake Porter Library-27333 Center Ridge Rd., Westlake, OH. Agenda: 6:30pm-7:00pm Social (Pastries and beverages); 7:15pm-8:30pm Main Program "2010 Income Tax Updates" by Ian Abbott. Ian's talk helps to prepare us for upcoming Income tax season.
01/19	Ladies Only Special Interest Group meeting at Westlake Porter Public Library from 2:00 pm to 3:30 pm. The Library is located at 27333 Center Ridge Road, Westlake, Ohio. All ladies are invited, whether or not members of Northeast Ohio PC Club (NEOPC). Come with your questions and/or comments about software you have.
01/26	NEOPC / CAGG Computer Class Orientation meeting, January 26th, 10:00 am, Fairview Park Senior Center. Anyone of senior age can enjoy these FREE classes conducted by volunteers of NEOPC and CAGG. You or your family members who qualify must attend one of these Orientation Meetings to establish your interest and to be included in class invitations. Merely show-up to get started.
02/02	Facebook SIG Meeting! For anyone who wants to learn about using Facebook. Meeting the first Wednesday of the month 10am to 11:30am at the Fairview Park Branch of the Cuyahoga County Public Library downstairs in meeting room A.

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REMOVE TIME STAMPS, ETC.

It is a power user tool to change file and folder attributes, date, time, NTFS compression, and even changes the Exit information. It runs in the Windows Shell, which allows you to right click in Windows Explorer and choose "Change Attributes." Its dialog box opens and you make your changes.

With these tools, I can make changes to several photos at once. I can change the file names using a title and numbering them sequentially, remove the time stamp, and then change the file date attribute. Now that's what computers were designed to do—make tasks simpler.

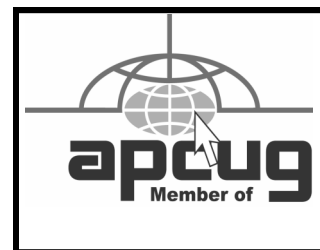
IF IT'S TUESDAY, IT MUST BE...

When necessary, Microsoft releases security updates on the second Tuesday of each month. They publish security bulletins to announce and describe the update. Occasionally security updates are released more often. Please check the following website for details.

<http://www.microsoft.com/security/updates/bulletins/default.aspx>

General Meeting Program Schedule

January 12	"2010 Income Tax Updates" by Ian Abbott. Ian's talk will help us in preparing Income Taxes.
February 09	"Digital Photography" by Todd Johnson. Todd's talk includes "Tips and Tricks" on taking better pictures.
March 09	"New Features of Microsoft Windows 7" by Sean Meadows / ACC of Norwalk.
	<u>Proposed Programs</u>
April 13	"Q & A" with Lee Gerber and Dennis Lewis.
May 11	"Computer Backup" by Dennis Lewis.
June 08	"Comparison of Computer Processors" by Tony Kurkov.



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