



# DWPC Technology Newsletter

Technology news from David W. Potts Consulting, LLC

[david.w.potts@att.net](mailto:david.w.potts@att.net) [www.oregoncomputer.com](http://www.oregoncomputer.com) 503.659.5588

Volume 8 Number 5

September-October, 2019



**Welcome to the forty-fifth edition** of the *DWPC Technology Newsletter*. We hope you find this information helpful. If you no longer wish to receive this newsletter, please send us an email, indicating such. If you received this newsletter from a friend and wish to be added to the mailing list, please send an email to the address above and indicate your desire to receive the newsletter. Please feel free to share this newsletter with your friends.

**I didn't make that phone call!** I expect you have received phone calls from what appear to be local phone numbers, that end up being from robo-callers or scammers (posing as Microsoft support, Publisher's Clearing House, etc.). I recently received a call from a gentleman, attempting to return my call, whom I had never called (nor did I know). Come to find out, the time stamp on his phone showed a time when there was nobody at my home office, so the call could not have been from my phone. The gentleman re-checked his phone and verified the number . . . and it was, indeed, mine! In speaking with him, further, he informed me the same thing happened to him, months earlier, when the mother of a pre-teen girl returned a call, she thought was from his number, wondering why he was trying to call his young daughter (he did not make the original call)!

**Less than 5 months before the Windows 7 end-of-life, January, 2020** Microsoft will stop supporting Windows 7, January 14, 2020. Once an operating system has reached his end-of-life, its manufacturer no longer offers updates. Updates are often to close security holes, so, once an operating system is unsupported, vulnerabilities will not be addressed. If you are running a computer with Windows 7, you will want to consider upgrading to a new computer, before 2020. As so many computers are still running Windows 7, I will continue to provide reminders, throughout 2019, in my newsletters. As reported in my newsletter from July-August, 2018 (Volume 7, Number 4), there is a possibility your Windows 7 computer has a "reservation" for Windows 10. If your computer keeps up with you, it may be worth trying the Windows 10 Upgrade, to see if your computer has a Windows 10 reservation. I strongly suggest backing up your computer, before any major upgrades. Please let us help you see if your computer can be upgraded to Windows 10 or help migrate you to a new computer.

**What do you mean my Windows 10 won't be supported?!** As I have mentioned in a number of my newsletters, with the advent of Windows 10, Microsoft considers Windows a "service," instead of an "operating system." To keep Windows computers safe, Microsoft requires users to keep their Windows version updated (similar to the "Service Packs" with earlier versions of Windows). If you receive a message, indicating your version of Microsoft Windows will no longer be supported, you should be able to update your Windows 10 to the latest release, from Windows Update. It is a good idea to perform a full image backup of your computer to a USB hard disk drive, before performing major updates. Please let us know if you would like assistance, updating or upgrading your system.

**More scams!** The US CERT (United States Computer Emergency Response Team) is warning of new tax scams. One revolves around pre-recorded phone messages, threatening to suspend or cancel a victim's Social Security number and the other involves email phishing, from a fake agency, the "Bureau of Tax Enforcement," claiming the victim owes past due taxes. First, the IRS does not telephone or email people regarding urgent tax issues. Often, these scams (and others) will try to convince the victim to purchase prepaid cards (prepaid "credit," merchant (e.g. Target or Best Buy), etc.) or to "wire" the money or pay with cryptocurrency (e.g. BitCoin), as these are usually untraceable, making it easier for the thief to obtain the money, with no ability to reverse the transaction. Often, scams stress urgency, to try to get the victim to make a poor snap decision, without thinking of the consequences. Always be suspicious if you are being pressured to make a decision or if you are being asked to pay with something other than a credit card (especially if being asked to pay using one of the aforementioned methods). If you are contacted by a scammer, please report them to the appropriate agency. Toward the end of this newsletter is contact information for the Oregon Attorney General's office.

**Ransomware still out there!** Recently, a number of US cities, including Baltimore, MD and River City, FL, were hit with ransomware attacks, with a Baltimore spokesperson stating the attack is costing the City over 18 MILLION Dollars! River City decided to pay the ransom of over \$600,000. According to reports, the attack at River City was launched by a City employee opening an infected email attachment. Ransomware attacks encrypt data, with some attacks not only encrypting local data, but also data on servers (as was the case, here). The criminals who orchestrated the attack then attempt to extort ransom to provide a “key” to access the data (no guarantees!). Never open unexpected email attachments (without verifying their authenticity, with the sender) and be careful of files you download from the Internet. An ounce of prevention is worth pounds of cure!

**Hackers exploiting Windows RDP** Windows Terminal Servers and “Pro” versions of Windows allow remote connections. Hackers are exploiting Windows’ Remote Desktop Protocol to access systems. Two ways to help protect yourself are to use a nonstandard TCP Port for your RDP connection and a strong password to log into your computer.

### **So—your smartphone’s screen isn’t large enough (introducing the Samsung Galaxy Fold)?**

Are you one of the few people who, with the introduction of the iPhone X, thought “boy, \$1000 isn’t enough to pay for a smartphone!”? Do you need a huge screen on your smartphone? Well, if both of those point to you, you are in luck. Samsung has introduced their new Galaxy “Fold” . . . the second production smartphone that has a folding screen! The Galaxy Fold sports a 4.6” outside screen, and opens to a 7.4” tablet. The device has 3 rear cameras; wide, ultrawide and telephoto, as well as two front cameras. Samsung has introduced something they call “Multi Active Window,” that allows a user to have three apps running on the tablet screen. Although cool, I can’t justify the price tag, so I won’t be running out to purchase my Galaxy Fold . . . at least not for a while! The release date of the Galaxy Fold was delayed until September, 2019, with a starting [list] price of \$1980. There are also “folding” phones being released soon by Huawei, Motorola and TCL.

**Scam and Fraud Resources** are available through the office of the Oregon Attorney General. As scammers are quickly creating elaborate ways to separate you from your money, I strongly suggest you use complex passwords, that you change often, and visit the Oregon Attorney General's Web site at [www.oregonconsumer.gov](http://www.oregonconsumer.gov), to keep abreast of newer scams and help learn ways to keep you and your family safer, and report potential scams. You can also contact Ellen Klem of the Oregon Attorney General's office at [ellen.klem@state.or.us](mailto:ellen.klem@state.or.us) or 503.507.1061.

**Java and QuickTime security alerts!** As Oracle's Java and Apple’s QuickTime continue to be security risks, I am continuing to include warnings in my newsletters. You can view the alert from the US Computer Emergency Readiness Team about QuickTime, at <https://www.us-cert.gov/ncas/alerts/TA16-105A>. Oracle has a Web page that details how to disable Java, at: [http://www.java.com/en/download/help/disable\\_browser.xml](http://www.java.com/en/download/help/disable_browser.xml). Either program can be uninstalled from the Windows Programs and Features Control Panel. If you do need to run Java, ensure you are using the latest release and remove any old versions. If you have any questions about this or other security issues (or any other computer questions), please feel free to contact David W. Potts Consulting and we will be happy to help you.

**How do I . . .** Please submit questions to me via email to the email address at the top of page 1. Questions may be answered in future issues of this newsletter, or may be addressed individually. I often have clients who exclaim, after my correcting their issue, how they have been frustrated by working on an issue for weeks before calling me. Often the problem takes less than an hour to correct. Many mention how, next time, they will call me first to avoid the frustration! Please allow us to assist you with your technology needs!

**David W. Potts Consulting** will be happy to assist you with your hardware, software and network selection, purchase, integration, troubleshooting and training. We specialize in Microsoft Windows computers and networking and can also assist you with home theatre and other electronics and technology consulting.

The information contained in this newsletter is provided at no cost. David W. Potts Consulting, LLC provides no warranty, express or implied, for this information and the user assumes all liability for any issues arising out of the use of the information contained herein. The information contained herein is the intellectual property of David W. Potts Consulting, LLC. This information may be freely distributed, as long as it is distributed in its entirety and David W. Potts Consulting, LLC is acknowledged as the source of its content. Happy computing!