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Thanksgiving Holiday Hours

Just a friendly reminder!

Big Blue Water will be closed on Thursday November 26th and Friday November 27th and will re-open Monday the 30th during normal business hours. Yeah, we take breaks every once in a while too :)

We wish you a safe and happy Thanksgiving!

TAKE CARE COMING INTO THE HOLIDAYS ..

He asked if I'd take a quick look at his computer; it wasn't working well and he didn't have a lot of money to spend on it but he really needed his computer for his business – this afternoon if possible. Friends being friends, I said “sure, bring it over”.

He brought me FIVE of them. “Somebody” had already worked on them for him. Two of them were literally gutted – parts lying loose inside the machine.

The original machine that we were talking about came in with “pop-ups” and “system32 errors”. 343 viruses plus a rogue antivirus program plus Norton Internet Security that expired a year ago.

Another one was loaded with peer-to-peer file sharing software. The way that works – peer-to-peer file sharing – is that you open up a part of your

November 18, 2009

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Business hours:
 Monday thru Friday
 10:00 am - 4:00 pm

Send a Soldier a Netbook

Big Blue Water along with other local businesses are joining together to support our soldiers. Soldiers are sent away from friends and family for long periods of time and we, at Big Blue Water, would like to use technology to bring our soldiers closer to those they love. Beginning October 2009 we will began a campaign to collect funds to purchase and donate a netbook to soldiers departing to Iraq.

If you would like to help, feel free to stop by

computer to the other 9 million people who are using that file sharing site. Those 9 million people do the same thing. If you don't know what you're doing and you set it up wrong, you might open up your entire computer to the file sharing site. What's that mean? It means that all of those 9 million people can read the stuff on your computer – and put stuff on your computer.

If that's not enough – that you've opened your entire system to whoever wants access to it – you do not have a valid antivirus program running. Or what you have is mediocre antivirus. Or something free that someone gave you or you downloaded from the internet. Or – you've got great antivirus software – you paid \$80 or something for it – the antivirus company stays on top of things and pushes out updates hourly – but you have updates and notifications turned off. How would you know? You never look at that stuff – in fact, you wouldn't know where to look at that stuff.

So then you get a phone call from 'somebody' who is going to sell you magic software to make your machine run like it's brand new. Or the kid down the road says "Hey I can fix it for ya".

Not a big deal. Maybe it's not really your computer – it belongs to the company – or it's your kid's computer. But then you end up with a virus that has propagated to five machines. Or you end up with gutted machines. Sometimes you need to consider throwing them all away – start over.

But you have to have your data for the business. And you don't want to lose your email, your photos, your music, your invoices, or that book you've been writing. You've customized it to work the way that you do or someone else did it for you. You're not sure how it got that way – and not sure you could do it again - but it's the thing you are used to – and you like it that way.

If you really want to keep things the way they are and you want to avoid the frustration and disappointment – perhaps you need to be a little more proactive in taking care of it.

You have to run virus protection. You can't skimp on that. You can't let it expire. You can't ignore it when it tells you that you have a problem.

Be careful who you connect with – on the computer, on the phone, and in person. File sharing and social network sites can be great but you need to protect yourself and make sure the people you are connecting to only have access to the things you want them to have access to.

If you get a phone call from someone who offers to help you with a virus you mistakenly downloaded to your machine, be leery. They might tell you they work for Dell, Microsoft, Norton, or another corporation that's well known. They'll ask you to download software to fix the problem. What they are really doing is getting you to download software that gives them remote access to your system – and everything on it.

If you would like to help, feel free to stop by our office to drop off your donation amount. Or, go to <http://bigbluewater.com/send-a-soldier> to make a contribution via PayPal. Also available are donation cans at The Sand Bar Saloon and the Fennville VFW.

Any questions? Please call Melissa at Big Blue Water 269-857-5517.

The First Netbook Has Been Delivered

On November 11, after the Veteran's Day Parade a local soldier, Rob Boyce set for deployment in February, was presented with a Lenovo Netbook, carrying case and external CD drive. Pictured below are Owen Smith of the Saugatuck VFW, Rob Boyce and Betty Hardin owner of Big Blue Water.



Thanksgiving Treats..

Submitted by Gann Corbett. Thanks Gann!

CRANBERRY FLUFF

- 4 Cups fresh cranberries
- 3 Cups miniature marshmallows
- 3/4 Cup sugar
- 2 Finely chopped tart apples
- 1/2 Cup halved green grapes
- 1/2 Cup chopped nuts
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1 Heaping Cup Cool Whip

Chances are that Microsoft isn't going to call you soliciting virus cleanup work – and quite frankly, neither am I. Viruses are not cost effective for anyone.

Be leery of calls that come from 'unknown' numbers at various times throughout the day and when you pickup there is nobody there or you hear a ringing tone – it's really a callback system that checks to see when you are home. I don't answer "unknown" calls anymore. I let them go to voice mail. If it's a legitimate caller, they'll leave a message.

Especially now – coming into the holidays – you need to be more careful. There are a lot of scam artists out there.

If you get an email telling you that you have a virus – don't click the links in that message. Ignore the message.

At the first sign of your computer acting "funny", stop what you are doing and run a full virus scan and update on your computer.

If you are planning to buy a new computer for Christmas, it will most likely come with a 30-day free trial of antivirus software (usually Norton or McAfee). Don't wait 30 days. Upgrade or replace it as soon as you can.

Antivirus and malware software serve a purpose. If you want a good one, you have to spend the money – every year. You need to make sure that it updates every day – and you need to check it once in awhile to make sure it's updating. If it is not updating, you need to fix it or get it fixed. When you buy or renew your software, put it on your calendar for renewal next year and put it in your budget.

If you own a business, you need to apply rules to ensure the integrity and security of your systems – and your business. You need to enforce those rules through lock down procedures and software, you need to monitor both user and system activity, and you need to make sure that your people understand that those rules and software exist –that you are watching what they do – and that there are consequences of a breach.

Standardize on the settings of your computer – and your network. If you can live with default settings leave it set to default. Don't change it because it's pretty or cool – make changes because it's more efficient or cost effective. If you have 10 computers, standardize on the hardware as well as the software and settings.

Standardization provides several benefits – the least of which is that you won't be so disappointed if the machine has to be rebuilt because your things won't "move" – they'll be in the same place they were the last time that you used them. It also means that you'll know when things are misbehaving – and if your security software fails, you may have a clue that you have a problem before it escalates into something much bigger.

Finally, if you think you have a problem, give us a call. We can help you to

Place berries in food processor or blender and process until finely chopped. Transfer to a bowl, add the marshmallows and sugar.

Cover and refrigerate for at least 4 hours, or over night. Just before serving stir in the apples, grapes, nuts, and salt. Fold in Whip Cream.

This is a favorite and perfect for the Holiday Season!!! Enjoy!

Letter to the Editor..

Your techie questions finally answered

From our last newsletter, one reader asked:

Thanks so much for this newsletter - very helpful!! Question: Will Google sync work with two Outlook calendars - I have one on a laptop and one on my desktop? Thanks again.

Answer:

I'm assuming you are looking to synchronize 1 calendar across multiple machines. If so, you should be able to install Google Sync on both machines and configure it to synchronize using the same Google account. When updates are made on any of the 3 calendars - laptop, desktop, or Google calendar - they should synchronize to the other 2 locations.

powered by
MailChimp

work through any of these issues and become more proactive in caring for your equipment.

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