

Cutler Bay NEWS

JANUARY 5 - 18, 2016

communitynewspapers.com

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Searching for a way out of computer purgatory

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Once again I find myself in computer purgatory.

This seems to be happening a lot to me lately. Perhaps it is because I always feel that I should be up to date on all the latest revisions and improvements made to what I have, both software and hardware.

I am sure most of you by now had seen the invitation from Microsoft to download Windows 10 at no charge and time is running out before this offer will be rescinded. I checked around to a few somewhat knowledgeable people and got mixed reviews on Windows 10. Some said it was great; others warned me not to download, including my resident IT person. (Guess who that is?)

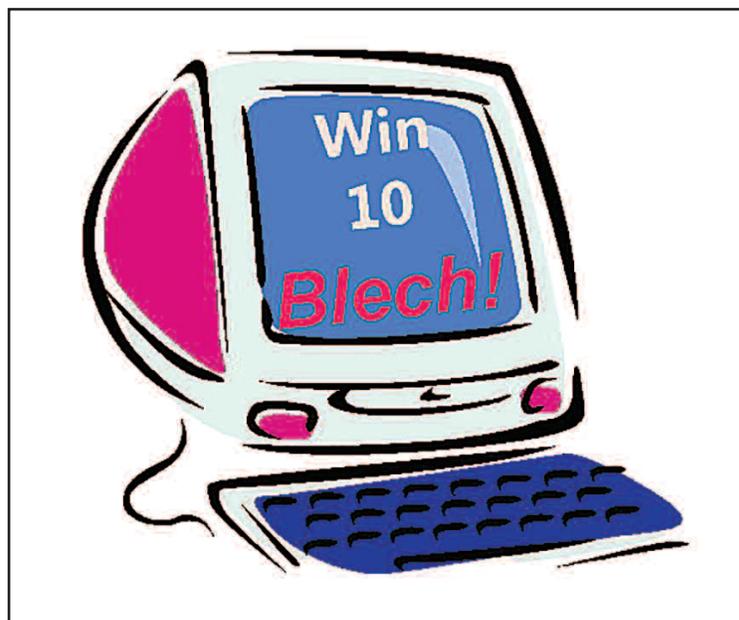
I went ahead and did it anyway. The first thing I noticed were a whole bunch of "download here" buttons that I assumed would download the new program. Not so. What they did do was tell me how many drivers I had that were too old to function and that I absolutely had to have a program to search out and replace these drivers.

I thought how nice of Microsoft to want to take care of my computer this way, until I saw the monthly charge associated with it and that the company offering it was not, in fact, Microsoft but what is referred to as a Microsoft partner. Beware of these words. To my knowledge Microsoft does not have any "partners." I decided to go ahead with the download of Windows 10 even with my old drivers. Everything worked fine except that one of my two monitors would no longer function. I have gotten used to using two monitors and frankly can't live without both of them being in operation.

I called Microsoft for help and apparently reached another partner who spent a great deal of time scanning every single thing in my computer so that he could announce to me that my computer was full of bad stuff and had to be cleaned and he could provide a service for several hundred dollars to do this.

I decided to go back to the manufacturer of my computer, Dell, and see if I could get some help from them. They have usually been helpful in the past and I thought that on a simple problem like this they would immediately address it. They did in their own fashion. By that I mean they immediately checked my warranty and found out that it was now out of warranty and that for \$370 they would give me some time on the phone to try and solve my problem. Based on the cost of new computers today I decided that this was not such a good deal.

In my efforts to correct my monitor problem I tried shifting what was on one screen to the other screen. This worked out fine in that now I had two screens that were totally black and apparently no way to get back to my original screen with all my programs and data. Did I panic? You bet I did. As you might imagine, a good part of my life is in this electronic device on my desk and not being able to access



any of it would be a little frightening

Not long ago my wife had problems with what was called the crypto locker, a form of virus that encrypts everything in your computer and can be retrieved by simply sending the hacker \$1,000 in cash. Not wanting to send that much money to some teenager in Russia we tried to get help from the local Microsoft store in Kendall. They kept it for several days and accomplished nothing. We did learn about a company in West Palm Beach who promised to be able to solve the problem. The solution was a new computer and hundreds of miles driving back and forth to West Palm. Are we having fun yet?

I have been noticing a little shop right in our backyard on SW 186th Street that said "we repair computers."

I figured it was certainly worth a try because I didn't have to drive hundreds of miles to get there. I dropped the computer off one day, and they called me the next day to tell me that they have solved the problem and I was welcome to come and pick up my computer with the two monitors and take it home.

I was thrilled and asked how much I owed them. The reply, and don't expect this to be offered to everyone, was "I really can't charge you because we didn't do that much to get your computer going again." Wow!

The name of this fabulous place is PC Miami Techman at 9971 SW 184 St., owned by a guy named Leo. Tell him I sent you. It felt good to be supportive of a local merchant who knows what he is doing.

BTW... My book, *When I Was Your Age*, is selling well. Email me if you wish to place an order direct or visit Books and Books in Coral Gables, Amazon or Kindle online.

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