

So very confused...

When I went to work this morning, I just logged off of a working internet connection. When I got home this evening, the connection no longer worked. After spending quite a bit of time on the phone with my provider, the only solution was to re-install the software. It worked (as you may be able to tell), but I really don't know why it worked. I really don't know why the connection failed in the first place.

It is a Cell Modem. Open it up, dial the number – Name and password are automatic. I can't see what went wrong. Neither could the tech person. I think the software reload was grasping at straws. Anyway, I've updated to the latest version, so I hope it will be good for a few months.

Oh well, I still got my laundry done today.. I just wish I had self cleaning clothes. And of course permanent press that was actually permanent. Buttons that stayed on new shirts! I wonder why my dark pants (black and blue) seem to shrink more than the browns, tans and beiges. They all started out the same brand and size. For some reason they all seem to shrink in the length.

Random thoughts for today

I was strolling around the internet (I don't surf, that just goes too fast), and I found a few interesting things.

[On this site](#), I found two t-shirts I liked. The first was with Bela Lugosi as Dracula holding the head of a more recent movie vampire (yes, just the head). The saying was "Dracula never sparkled." Struck my sense of humor today. The other shirt on

the same site was "Meat is Murder. Quick eat the evidence." So today, I guess my humor is heading toward the violent stage. "Here's Johnny." ☐

Ok, I knew somebody had the list of what emoticons actually works here. [Ok, I found them, thanks again Derek!!](#) Why can't all of the various chat area, blog sites, bulletin boards, social networks, ect. use the same symbols. Why do they work sometimes and not others. Even being a technical person by trade, I get sick of technology... ☐

[Are we headed for a new form of the WWW?](#) Kind of discussed this last night with a friend or few. Mostly about if Facebook would start charging for use. Currently that is just a malicious rumor floating around, but as was said in the conversation, Facebook and other sites like that need some cash to exist. Now this article is more about premium content, but I wonder what premium content is. I already pay for my web access, about as much as I would pay for Cable/Satellite TV, Cell Phone usage ect., so I wonder how much more this would eventually cost. Like most people in the middle class, my budget is strained from all angles. I don't have pay TV for a number of reason, but one is I really don't want to pay for TV.

If it ever comes to the point that I have to pay for TV, I'll stop watching. I've said before there isn't much I want to watch, so it doesn't make any difference to me. I have internet access to keep up with friends, family, work and news of the day. I pay for that access to offset other areas I no longer use or pay for. If the outlets I use start charging me, on top of my access charge, I may stop using them. Unless I become independently wealthy. I can always go to the library to pick up newspapers and magazines. My taxes go to keep those organizations functioning, so I will use them. I can use other means to contact friends and family. But then as I said earlier, sometimes the technology bugs me...

[In what may be a good use for Ebooks, I found this article.](#)

Textbooks that can be modified or commented on by the professors/teachers. Cool stuff. I remember in school carting around a lot of books. And then in college pay tons of money for lots of books. Of course the teachers would always comment or add to the material present in the book. This forced the student to carry even more. I like the idea of getting this all on an E-book level and allow the students to carry around less material. Save trees and backaches. Now if they would only come up with a way to make that stupid textbook cheaper.

One final note. I went to the oriental restaurant on Sunday with my daughter. My taste buds were so messed up, I left the fortune cookies in the truck. Since my taste returned today I ate the cookies. The first fortune I had was "Everything will now come your way." The lucky numbers on this fortune just happened to be the birthdays (day of the month) of my four daughters, myself and my late wife. That is six numbers. The estimated jackpot for the Mega Millions jackpot is now 83 million for tonight's drawing. I met my late wife in 1983... Is that a sign? I'm not sure I believe in stuff like that, but I bought the ticket anyway. I used my late wife's birthday as the powerball and put the rest of the days in the regular numbers. One final little note: that combination of numbers never won the jackpot...

All about the Yaawwn

Is yawning contagious? Why is yawning contagious? Well, that subject was brought up as a comment in my last post. So I wondered if it would be a good topic to write about. As it turns out, I'm not really sure it is.

There are almost as many answers to the above question as there are scientists studying the phenomenon. And to put it quite bluntly, the studies were boring and made me yawn. But yes, it seems that for most people yawns are contagious. You can have a yearning to yawn by seeing someone yawn, hearing someone yawn and even reading about yawning. So if you feel like yawning while reading this post, it is because the word yawn is used a lot.

Some fun/interesting things I found out while looking up data on yawning:

- 1) Dogs yawn, dogs will yawn when they see people yawn.
- 2) Chimpanzees yawn.
- 3) It seems that most mammals yawn occasionally, but not all of them will yawn when they see other animals yawn.
- 4) Some birds yawn.
- 5) Snakes yawn after eating to get their jaws back in the right spot.
- 6) Contagious yawning may be linked to the flocking instinct of birds.
- 7) Too much yawning could indicate health problems.
- 8) Most people will yawn if tired.
- 9) Some people yawn if they are too hot.
- 10) Some athletes will yawn just before they need to exert themselves.

Now I think I'm done talking about yawning. I've yawned 4 times in the writing of this post. How many times did you yawn while reading it?

Now, I'm going to see if I can make my dog yawn.

My computer died...

It came quickly, but my laptop screen died. I wasn't sure exactly what happened but there was a quick blackout of the screen.

I now have my laptop attached to an external screen. After doing a quick search, I think what the problem is. Either the backlight or the inverter are going bad. They might be fixable, but it isn't an easy fix for me. I have the knowledge but not the ability. Fixing these problems requires fine motor skills. I'm much better at gross motor skills.

This would require soldering small wires, careful handling of a delicate bulb with mercury on the inside. Replacement of another delicate part. My fumble fingers and weak eyes just aren't up to that. Tomorrow, I will check to see how much it will cost to replace the parts. If too much, I may end up getting a new laptop. This laptop still works, but I will probably use it as another desktop at home. It can replace the older computer my youngest uses at home. Then she will be able to play some of the games that no longer work for her.

Just a bit of bad luck for the New Year.

When did it get so late?

I was checking out [ThinkGeek](#) and was surprised to see that the time just flew by. I thought for sure it was only 11:00, and it is really 12:30. I guess I found a few things I liked.

USB turntable for old vinyl records
thinking putty (silly putty with an attitude)

USB cell phone booster (oops out of stock)
Crayola Pen (looks like a crayon but is a pen)
R2D2 USB hub (I have a daughter who would like that)
USB rocket launcher
RC cars
RC helicopters
RC robots
Laser Pointers
and Astronaut Ice Cream!

And the list goes on and on. How much of this do I need? Not much. The most useful item seemed to be the USB cell phone booster. That may be nice for out in the country, but \$100 nice? I'm not sure.

Oh well it is past 12:30 now, and I should get some sleep...

Just after midnight

and I was asleep, but I woke to an intense headache. Two aspirin and a glass of milk later, the headache is receding and I'm wide awake. Hmmm...

Anyway, this reminded me of what I do when sleep eludes me. I like to read and now post in a blog. So why not combine the two.

Just last Sunday, there was a discussion of movies with the main plot being people hunting people. This has occurred in many places, but it always reminds me of a short story I read in my youth. I needed to find that story so I did a quick search of one place I go to find reading material. And I found the story. I'm fairly certain it predates most movies with that theme, if not a lot of other stories. It is on

Feedbooks.com so you can read it on your computer or other electronic device. For your pleasure [The Most Dangerous Game](#). Written in 1924, I read this story some time in the late 60's or early 70's. I don't remember what anthology had it, but I do remember reading it more than once. It was a good story then and it holds up well today. I'm going to do more searching to see if this story type had earlier roots.

Speaking of good places to find free books, I found the following sites:

www.feedbooks.com

[Project Gutenberg](#)

[Google Books](#)

Late night, insomnia hitting? Nothing better than a good story. And now no excuses about cost or making a trip to the library.

Now all I need is a Kindle or some other small electronic reader and I can take them wherever I go. Not as good as a hard copy, but I might be able to get used to it.

I need sleep, but I just saw a story that might be interesting... ☐

Remind me again, why do I like computers?

I had to re-install windows on my laptop today. Now I have to make sure that everything that should be working is. Then there are some other programs I use that will need to be re-installed. This machine is getting older, so I may have to shop for a new hard drive soon. Seems like there are more 'bad' sections recently. I'm glad I backup my data files with

some regularity. I would hate to lose pictures of my kids, grandkids, weddings, and other fun occasions.

The bigger problem is the small fact that I have a lot of computers in this house. It seems like I was re-installing some operating system just last week. Oh, I was, it was on my 'play' machines where I keep installing different versions of Linux.

I have noticed one thing, my touch pad seems to be a bit more sensitive. I keep having my cursor jump all around the screen as I type this. I've had to go back and correct mistakes as the cursor jumps to places earlier in this post. I need to check that out too. Grumble...

Oh well, I got the sound to work again.... Now if I can just find my CD with 100 card games on it... ☐

Talking maps

After the wonderful drive back from Florida, I went out and purchased a GPS system. My good friends take theirs with them everywhere they go (just about) and use it to find hotels, restaurants, and other fun places. Further adventures with "Jill" can be found [here](#). I haven't used mine long enough yet for the voice to be accepted, but right now she is called Samantha. That's the name the voice came with, but I do find it slightly annoying (the voice, not the name).

My daughter and son-in-law (one of three pairs, take your guess), took me to a place called [The Blarney](#). It was a great little place. I'm not sure how authentic it keeps to real pubs in Ireland, but it was a fun time. I had hoped my talking map would get me there, but we didn't have the address, and it

wasn't in the restaurant list, we made our best guess. Lucky for us there was no ball game, the Blarney is just a short walk away from the Mudhens stadium. This is going to be on my list of places to go. I'm not a bar scene person but this was a lot of fun. The Bangers and Mash was fantastic. I have to add this place to my talking map.

I'm hoping I can find some downloads for places like this on the GPS site. I'm wondering now if there are other Irish or English pubs in the area. Or maybe a coffee shop or two? Other places I may want to see. Who knows.

The funny thing is, I picked the GPS up because I wanted to make a side trip on my way back from Florida. I didn't have a map, and I didn't use Google Maps or Mapquest to plan my trip back. By the time I got an Atlas, I was passed any good way of getting to where I wanted to be. That may have been a blessing, since my truck battery decided to give out, but that was the cause of me getting more tech stuff. Really, it wasn't because I wanted another toy. I'm a very good map reader, and I like plotting my own course. I've tested the GPS already and it mapped the same travel routes that I did. So do I think like a computer? You don't have to answer that one.

So be on the lookout for more adventures with my talking map. I hope I don't get sent directions to turn into a lake... ☐

Falling off the edge

The problem digital TV is that you either get the picture or you don't. I was watching a show this evening when everything went black. I tried other stations and they were black too. I'm fairly certain there is some sort of weather going on between me and the stations antennas. In the old analog days,

just a couple of months ago, the stations would have filled with static, and I could have watched the end of the show. Now I just have to wait until I can watch it on the net (and they don't seem to have fast forward), or catch repeat. I think I'll just skip it.

I started thinking about this digital drop point. Why should they drop off so quickly? I haven't studied the technology behind it yet, but I wonder why a digital signal should just drop off to nothing. On occasion, I've noticed the pixelated views of the digital signal when the wind starts blowing, or rain falls. I'm thinking that an advanced receiver could capture enough pixels to keep the sound and video going for a bit. A time delay buffer should be able to mix and fill in the missing data. It's done in digital videos and photography, so why not on TV. Just wondering...

I'm not that much of a geek...

There are some tech that this computer geek isn't into. The biggest one is the cell phone. I have one to use as a phone. I don't text, take pictures, play games, download songs or read my email on my cell phone. I don't want one with a full keyboard. I don't want a touch screen model. If I had my way, my phone would only be a phone.

I had an PDA for a while, but after a time I just quit using it. I had calendars and note taking software on my computers. I did not replace it with a blackberry or i-phone.

The cell phone is even pushing it for me. The only reason I picked it up was to have a way for my girls to get in touch with me. Being a single dad, this was important. The latest phone I have does include a 'camera'. It takes lousy pictures,

so I'm better off with my digital camera.

What brought all this up today? Well, last night I got a text message from a number that I did not recognize. The area code placed it in Akron, but I guess it could be from there, or it could have been a 'kept' cell phone number. I was considering calling it to tell the person I don't text. I didn't. It didn't seem worth it. I keep meaning to go to my provider to see if I can remove the texting. I wouldn't miss it at all, and I think I would stop wondering about the strange text messages I get. Would I then get phone calls?