
Subject: Another ratbag day
Posted by [b_twin_1](#) on Fri, 09 Dec 2011 01:31:46 GMT
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Including a battle, a bag.... and no rats. (pewh!)

Subject: Re: Another ratbag day
Posted by [Fiona](#) on Fri, 09 Dec 2011 01:56:10 GMT
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Quote: And I have to flush my toilet by taking the lid of the tank off and YANKING till I can get a plumber in. And have I mentioned I have Fiona coming tomorrow? Yo, Fiona, how are you at cold water, limescale and yanking?

LOL - believe it or not, I can cope with that (our toilet has a nice little trick of disengaging the handle from the flush mechanism, so you have to take the lid off and reconnect things)

Subject: Re: Another ratbag day
Posted by [EMoon](#) on Fri, 09 Dec 2011 03:42:48 GMT
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I hate new computers for the same reason--you always have to change the software (at least some of it) and lose stuff you used to have in the process, and they've mucked about the new software so it takes up more operating memory, loads slower, is harder to find the few things you do want to do amongst the vast heap of things you don't want.

OTOH...and it may be cruel to mention it...when a friend in NY pointed out on my newsgroup at sff.net that the yarn shop in A- was acting like a clique and why was I going there...I Googled once again and found a yarn shop 30 miles closer. And went by (because I had to go to that town, G-, to pick up a print order at FedEx-Kinko's, and to get groceries.) It's smaller, but does not exude upper-upper-middle-class-suburbia as much, and everyone I met in it (in the course of feeling all the yarn and buying way too much stuff including two more books) smiled and said Hi and I felt much more comfortable. The staff consists of one, and even so she seems less harried and friendlier than the several staff in the one in A-. So...goodbye yarn shop in A- and I'll be spending my money at yarn shop in G- instead. In a fit of gratitude, I kept finding things to buy. But I did need a needle gauge to replace the old cardboard one of my mother's, and the books and the additional long cable and some points in a size I don't have...

Sometimes if you're lucky when the toilet handle breaks off it leaves a sort of nub an inch long. Sometimes. Sometimes when it does that, you have a piece of pipe (any pipe: PVC, galvanized, copper) lying around that's the right diameter to just fit over the nub, and you can shove it hard over the nub and have a makeshift handle. That's once in about five broken toilet handles, in my experience. Three of the other times it breaks off right at the base and you can use pliers or a wrench if you have one that fits around the part that comes out of the tank, though it's really easier to just sigh heavily and maybe cuss but take the top of the tank off. Two of the other times, the whole thing deconstructs itself completely and then you have no alternative but taking the heavy lid off the tank every single time. If the toilet handle breaks in an apartment or rented house, the landlord always thinks it's your fault. "You shouldn't have been using so much force on it."

Subject: Re: Another ratbag day
Posted by [HorsehairBraider](#) on Fri, 09 Dec 2011 04:29:37 GMT
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Oh no. Computer problems and plumbing problems on the same day? Yikes. That's just not fair...

I too wish the OS on a computer would just stay the same, and that when you got a new computer it was still the same, and did not continually "update" itself. I keep thinking what it would be like if my jeweler's pliers updated themselves all the time like the computer does... would I even be able to use them when they had all sorts of weird growths all over them? Makes me queasy thinking about it.

Subject: Re: Another ratbag day
Posted by [anne_d](#) on Fri, 09 Dec 2011 04:33:21 GMT
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Sorry about the Ratbag Day; you do seem to be having a run of them. Need Mr Bolty? He's fully charged. That special button, that sparkly one right there? That produces shocking pink lightning bolts. It's a custom mod, just for you. ;)

It does seem like all the "improvements" to computers just make them harder to use, grrrr. I hope your Archangels come through before you're forced to go all Cave Slayer on the New and Shiny Beastie. (For some reason, I'm hearing "Change Bad. BAD" in Buffy's voice.)

I expect N&S will tell you its name once it settles in. I call our PC Hodgman, but I'm the only one who names objects around here (my car is always Amazon, the Husband's is Swallow, and my sewing machine is Arachne).

Subject: Re: Another ratbag day
Posted by [texturedknitter](#) on Fri, 09 Dec 2011 05:32:28 GMT
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EMoon wrote on Thu, 08 December 2011 22:42OTOH...and it may be cruel to mention it...when a friend in NY pointed out on my newsgroup at sff.net that the yarn shop in A- was acting like a clique and why was I going there...I Googled once again and found a yarn shop 30 miles closer. And went by (because I had to go to that town, G-, to pick up a print order at FedEx-Kinko's, and to get groceries.) It's smaller, but does not exude upper-upper-middle-class-suburbia as much, and everyone I met in it (in the course of feeling all the yarn and buying way too much stuff including two more books) smiled and said Hi and I felt much more comfortable. The staff consists of one, and even so she seems less harried and friendlier than the several staff in the one in A-. So...goodbye yarn shop in A- and I'll be spending my money at yarn shop in G- instead. In a fit of gratitude, I kept finding things to buy.

I understand the reason for your discretion, but the hint of a good and heretofore unknown-to-me yarn store are driving me nuts. I'm not stalking you so I don't know if you've moved in the last several years, but if you haven't, I know exactly what A- store you mean and agree entirely. There's a really nice LYS about 30 miles further east in P- , and another nice, new one (very close to me, so I'd love them to stay in business) in J- , west of CP. The only G- I can think of doesn't have any yarn shops as far as I know. Unless it's the shop that, like A-, suffers from being very misleadingly named as not-actually-knitting-centric. I guess I should check it out sometime.

And for Robin: other people friending you on Ravelry doesn't affect your experience at all. The people YOU choose to friend show up in your Friends' Activity tab, so you can see what your RL friends have favorited/queued/etc. You might also want to friend people who have taste similar to yours, to let your friends' activity do all the work of finding Cool Stuff for you, basically.

Subject: Re: Another ratbag day
Posted by [Guest](#) on Fri, 09 Dec 2011 06:20:41 GMT
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WARNING - Im wearing my GEEK hat in the following post - there is a lot of info but it should answer a few questions and hopefully help with 3 of Robins key issues :)

1. DITCH THE FINGERPRINT SCANNER!!! ASAP

Its one of those gimmicky things that seems like a good idea but really is a bad one. Unless you can manage to scan your finger in exactly the same way every time it will not work most of the time and drive you nuts.

Turn it off, you WILL thank me :) And if your password is secure enough, that is as much as will need - if they steal your laptop they are just going to take the hard drive out and crack the data open directly so neither option will stop that, if thats what you are paranoid about.

2. Re battery life and Win 7 - I only upgraded from XP to Win7 this year so its still fresh for me. And for all those commenting about having to change - FYI XP has been around for 10 years, I for one am glad for a refresh and while it is a bit whizzy and bangy, it IS better.

For most people, the main performance issue is NOT the operating system but how badly they clog it up. FREX when you look at your main screen how many of the handy shortcut icons do you see. If its more than ten then its YOUR fault your computer is slow and sluggish to start up and depending on the programs, to run. It has to load all those programs in the background, all ready to go when you click on your icon.

Get RID of the ones you REALLY dont use every day, it DOES make a difference.

And with Win 7 it has lots of cool swishy effects, transparency and hovering over icons and stuff - its called Aero. The default option is to turn on all the bells and whistles. If you turn it all off it essentially functions visually like XP used to. However for the sake of your battery life (because the swishy effects use up resources and power) you can find a middle ground that gives you a nicer interface without interfering too much with your battery life.

And playing your DVD, using wireless and bluetooth or a 3G modem all the time? All fast ways to eat up your battery performance. A laptop battery is like a tank of gas, if you go slow on the flat, it will last all day, if you hoon it up and down hills it will last an hour. So the more functions/things you have your computer doing at once, the faster it uses the battery. And like a tank of gas, its a finite resource per charge.

I would be astonished if you got 5 hours of solid movie watching out of even a new laptop battery. But good luck :)

3. And finally re the issues with your versions of software - have you tried going back to the makers of it and seeing if there are updated versions that are more Win 7 friendly? If its a choice between upgrading the software or not running it on your New and Shiny at all, the upgrade (even tho there may be a cost) might be the option.

Bearing in mind that XP was around for 10 years, if you have quite old software that wasnt developed further, and you cant get it to go on Win 7 (have you tried compatiblity mode BTW? or a virtual XP session or setting it as dual boot) then yes you may just have to suck it up. Or go looking for more current Win7 friendly new programs? Bearing in mind the apparent crankiness of your old version may not necessarily be repeated in one that is taking advantage of technology improvements.....

These links might be of interest in getting your old stuff to work

<http://windows.microsoft.com/en-US/windows7/What-is-program-compatibility>

<http://www.howtogeek.com/howto/windows-vista/using-windows-vista-compatibility-mode/>

<http://www.sevenforums.com/tutorials/316-compatibility-mode.html>

Subject: Re: Another ratbag day

Posted by [Diane in MN](#) on Fri, 09 Dec 2011 06:23:36 GMT

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I haven't even dared try my two monster programmes, the homeopathic RADAR and the musical Finale: I'm afraid there will be blood and screaming.

The likelihood of blood and screaming probably depends on the age of the programs. You can check any descriptions (like on the box) or documentation (I know, I'm dating myself thinking you'd get any) that came with them to see what OSs they'll run on. You can also check the manufacturers' web sites to see if there are any updates to make them compatible with Windows 7. But since you have a business computer, you may have Windows 7 Professional installed. Windows 7 Pro is able to set up a "virtual XP" environment, and your XP programs would very likely run there if you couldn't update them for Windows 7. Raphael would know.

My purling is improving. My counting is getting worse. But maybe it'll be easier to pay attention when it's counting stitches instead of rows.

There is a hell of a lot of arithmetic involved in knitting. :) Luckily there are row counters and stitch markers to keep track of the numbers. (Assuming of course that you don't forget to bump up the number on the row counter . . . :)

And I have to flush my toilet by taking the lid of the tank off and YANKING till I can get a plumber in.

The works inside my toilet tanks are 20 years old. I resolutely DO NOT THINK about this in case it gives some gremlin ideas. Good luck with yours--although I suppose Atlas could replace the whole mechanism with his eyes closed.

Subject: Re: Another ratbag day

Posted by [rachel](#) on Fri, 09 Dec 2011 10:01:41 GMT
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Another geeky comment:

I have absolutely no brief for over-inflated operating systems with feature creep BUT, as bluerose says... if you look at the battery life prediction when you are driving hard up the hill, it will estimate how long it will last if you keep going up the hill. It can't estimate how long it will last if you are going to glide downhill and park up in ten minutes time.

Unless you sprung for the one with the totally accurate prediction mode (and I hear that's really buggy too)

Subject: Re: Another ratbag day
Posted by [Robin](#) on Fri, 09 Dec 2011 13:44:01 GMT
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Helpful computer comments:

Please remember that I *got* the thing two days ago, I'm *not* at all computer swift, AND I have archangels. Archangels, who told me not to bother with the fingerprint pass on earlier machines, said they thought it was worth a try on this one. It's been deactivated for the moment, and we may try again . . . or we may not. It's not MY paranoia that is requiring some kind of pass security--as I said in the blog--the MACHINE won't let this be turned off. *I* don't want to spend the rest of my life retyping a password every time I leave New and Shiny running for more than x minutes.

I specifically asked about battery life when I agreed to buy this one because I want to be able to watch ONE movie lying in bed (say) and unplugged in. I will plug it in again in the morning when we all get OUT of bed--but clearly it needs more than two hours' basic battery life to be whizzy and graphic for . . . um, average film length, so perhaps two hours. I do require it to be able to do this and it was sold to me as fit for purpose.

And the archangels and I are *in the process* of finding out how to update old programmes or *back* date New and Shiny so they'll talk to each other. This does take time and I have one or two other things going on right now. If it weren't that Gonfalon shows alarming signs of failing entirely I would have put off the inevitably diabolical breaking-in period with a new computer (and especially a new computer with major new frelling STUFF) till I got BOTH doodles and SHADOWS finished.

And finally . . . please remember that I skew what I say in the blog to attempt to be funny. I

probably am *nearly* as dumb as I look . . . but not quite, okay?

Thanks.

Subject: Re: Another ratbag day
Posted by [blondviolinist](#) on Fri, 09 Dec 2011 14:40:31 GMT
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Diane in MN wrote on Fri, 09 December 2011 01:23(Assuming of course that you don't forget to bump up the number on the row counter . . . :))
This, right here, is why I don't own a row counter & why I had to learn to manually count rows. I am pathologically unable to remember to bump the little thingy on the row counter. It's a sad disease. (But I'm now very good at reading my knitting.)

Subject: Re: Another ratbag day
Posted by [HorsehairBraider](#) on Fri, 09 Dec 2011 17:09:32 GMT
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Robin, it works - you *are* funny, and I nearly always have a smile on my face for hours after reading your blog.

And despite BlueRose's excellent and terrific advice, I *STILL* do not want anyone updating my jeweler's pliers. :d

Subject: Re: Another ratbag day
Posted by [PamAdams](#) on Fri, 09 Dec 2011 17:35:11 GMT
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Quote:this going to bed with your technology is getting out of control in my house.

My ability to do this is limited by the number of cats who believe that the bed is theirs.

Subject: Re: Another ratbag day
Posted by [Quill](#) on Fri, 09 Dec 2011 19:59:51 GMT
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As someone who uses both a PC and a Mac, I would (cautiously) venture to suggest that the next time you buy a new laptop/computer it should be an Apple product...you would have to buy Finale over again, but you could run it on a Mac. RADAR would require more effort, but you could keep it on the older machine.

I find the Mac system much easier to use and understand, and it doesn't constantly demand that one download patches every time one turns it on. It's not quite "it just works", but it's close. I've had Macs at home for four years now and among two machines I've had to restart a frozen one...maybe five or six times.

More expensive, yes...but you'd probably make up the difference in service calls.

Subject: Re: Another ratbag day
Posted by [jmeadows](#) on Fri, 09 Dec 2011 22:37:15 GMT
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Quill wrote on Fri, 09 December 2011 14:59As someone who uses both a PC and a Mac, I would (cautiously) venture to suggest that the next time you buy a new laptop/computer it should be an Apple product...

I think there are a few of us who'd love of Robin went over to the Mac side, but she's said a few times before that it's not for her, and her computer men don't do Macs. (I'm trying and failing to imagine the blog without occasional mentions of the archangels. *g*)

Subject: Re: Another ratbag day
Posted by [Blogmom](#) on Sat, 10 Dec 2011 01:53:45 GMT
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jmeadows wrote on Fri, 09 December 2011 16:37her computer men don't do Macs

Nor does her Blogmom.

Subject: Re: Another ratbag day
Posted by [EMoon](#) on Sat, 10 Dec 2011 03:34:14 GMT
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texturedknitter: G- is the town north of R-R- which is north of A- on I-35, and NeedleArts is the

shop's name. 708 Rock St.

(I don't know why I'm being so roundabout except that I don't want to make enemies of the people who love the other store. If it's your pet store and you love it and the people love you, I'm happy for you. I expect yarn shops are like books...or friends of any kind...you either click or you don't.)

Subject: Re: Another ratbag day
Posted by [equus_peduus](#) on Sat, 10 Dec 2011 19:00:24 GMT
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blondviolinist wrote on Fri, 09 December 2011 06:40Diane in MN wrote on Fri, 09 December 2011 01:23(Assuming of course that you don't forget to bump up the number on the row counter . . . :))
This, right here, is why I don't own a row counter & why I had to learn to manually count rows. I am pathologically unable to remember to bump the little thingy on the row counter. It's a sad disease. (But I'm now very good at reading my knitting.)

This is why I have six of these. They are genius. She will do them in custom colors, so I had her do two of each size, and match the colors between sizes so I know which one's which.

And I have to say... I still miss my Win98SE machine. I only slightly mourn the WinXP machine, and while the current Win7 machine and I have mostly figured out how to deal with each other, it has uh, [I]quirks/[I] (plus I haven't figured out how to get it to run my Japanese word processing program, which I don't use for word processing because my Japanese isn't good enough, but to help me read and understand without use of a paper dictionary, which works well, but is slow).
