

NEWSLETTER

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RECOVER IMAGES FROM A DAMAGED CAMERA CARD

A new, high-capacity SD card – about the size of a postage stamp - can hold thousands and thousands of photos. It's a photographer's dream! Of course, if the card breaks, it becomes a photographer's nightmare. That's why I recommend taking a number of smaller SD cards on a trip. If one breaks or gets lost, you haven't lost as many photos.

Then there are times when a memory card just goes haywire. You put it in the computer and it shows up blank, it's corrupt or just missing files.

If your card reader isn't broken and the card isn't externally damaged, you obviously have a problem card. But hope is not lost. There are recovery programs available (for free of course, I'm a tightwad) so try one of the following: [Zero Assumption.Recovery](#) and [Recuva](#). Note these programs will not just work on memory cards but are very useful for recovering accidentally erased files on flash drives and hard drives as well.

BROWSER ZOOM

You bought a new computer and it came with a big high-resolution monitor or you just couldn't resist that 30" model on sale at Fry's! Problem, the text on your favorite websites is way too small!

Fortunately, your browser has zoom shortcuts. In every major browser, pressing Control in Windows (Command for Macs) and then tapping the plus sign zooms in. Go too far? Control and the minus sign zooms out.

Want to go back to where you started? Control and 0 (that's a zero) puts it back to the default zoom level.

This way you can adjust every site you use to your individual taste. It will save your eyes and your sanity.

FOTOR

Fotor is a free download for PCs, Macs and smartphones that can turn basic snapshots into masterpieces. It just takes a few clicks.

On the download page, select the operating system you use. If you use Windows 8, you'll want to click on the Windows 8 link. Other versions of Windows can simply choose the Windows link. Then click the Download button.

Once you've downloaded and installed Fotor, you can get started right away. There's hardly any learning curve. Just add a photo to begin editing.

You can filter your image using scenes. These automatically adjust colors, brightness and sharpness based on the conditions in the photo.

You can also add effects or vintage filters for cool retro looks. Cropping, rotating, borders and more can be accessed using the toolbar on the right.

Fotor has easy tools for making collages or photo cards. Plus, you can even try your hand at high dynamic range photography. This is what gives some photos those amazing colors.

HDR is a combination of three photos of the same scene. One is overexposed, one underexposed and one with normal exposure. You can run it through Fotor's cloud algorithm to combine them into one awesome HDR photo.

Fotor has an extension for Chrome that lets you edit photos in your Web browser. If you want to try it on your smartphone, you can download it from the App Store or from Google Play.

Cost: Free

Link: <http://www.fotor.com/>

PHOTOTHECA

Thanks to digital photography, snapping dozens, hundreds, or even thousands of photos has never been easier. You don't have to develop them, and you don't have to worry about where to put them.

Well, at least not in the real world. In the digital world, you do have to find a place to put them. And while it's easy to snap off 50 photos in a minute it can be hard to catalog and organize them.

If you even want a prayer of being able to find the photo you're looking for, you need to manage your photos by date, location, album or subject. That sounds like a lot of work, especially if you have a backlog of unsorted digital pictures on your computer.

Thankfully, there are software tools to take the weight off your shoulders. Phototheca is an all-in-one photo manager and viewer that can help you automatically catalog photos into easy albums.

Once you've installed the program, you need to import photos. You can do this by clicking File>Import photos. You can import from hard drives, flash drives, CDs and more in large batches.

Then you can either create new albums by sorting photos into them by hand, or you can create Smart Albums. Smart Albums automatically populates a new album with photos by using the timestamp, camera model, file name and other criteria.

For example, you can select photos taken after Jan. 1st using your Nikon DSLR and automatically fill the album. Then you can automatically populate an album with cellphone photos. You can batch correct the timestamps if they're wrong for any reason.

No matter how you organize your photos inside Phototheca, they won't be moved around on your hard drive. However, when you import from a removable drive like an SD card or USB stick, Phototheca will copy the images onto your local drive.

Phototheca lets you view your photos as a slideshow or a calendar. You can browse events and albums by scrolling back and forth between months or years. When you view a slideshow, you can automate the time spent on a photo or advance manually in windowed or full screen mode.

It can also delete duplicate photos automatically so you can save on hard drive space. Phototheca recognizes JPG, PNG, GIF and BMP file formats.

Note that Phototheca requires a graphics system that supports OpenGL. Older computers might not be able to run it correctly. If that is the case, the program will let you know.

Details: <http://lunarship.com/>

PRISM VIDEO CONVERTER

Prism is a shareware video file converter from NCH Software. It can convert files from and to most common formats, including AVI, MPG, VOB, WMV, and FLV, singly or in batches, and it also converts any file format based on a DirectShow codec into AVI and WMV files. Basically, if you can play it with Windows Media Player, you can convert it with Prism, according to the developer. It also fetches and converts files directly from DVDs and multimedia devices. The original download is for a free trial of the paid version of the software. However, NCH is apparently well aware of the competition since conversion to AVI and WMV formats is still free after the shareware's 14-day trial expires. That makes Prism an attractive choice for the multitude of users who really only want to convert videos into a format they can view anyway. Read more and download the software [here](#).

SPEEDY PAINTER

Painter is a simple and lightweight painting software program. It supports Wacom tablets to vary size and opacity of brush strokes according to pen pressure but can be used with a mouse. It is a fun program and I found it to be a big hit with kids as well as adults. Give it a try, download it [here](#) for free from the Cnet website.



RED, WHITE and BLUE

I am not very impressed with politicians (especially the bunch of morons we have in Washington right now) but one very good thing they set up was the Library of Congress. I was looking for some information about early panoramic images when I stumbled upon a section of this library with a huge number of treasures from the past. For a real treat try exploring the past with treasures from the library and other archives - Civil War and historical archives....presidential documents....film and newspaper clips...photos of sports greats and much more. Just go to [this link](#) and find a bunch of really interesting facts! As an added bonus reproductions of most of the pictures can be downloaded for free and some can be ordered.

Below is a panoramic view over the city of San Francisco created in 1914 which is before some of us (maybe not all, right Walt?) were born!



Another Library of Congress gem is old newspapers. They have an amazing collection of newspapers dating **back to 1690! Take a look [here.](#)**

I FIX IT

iFixit.com is a global community of tinkerers dedicated to helping people fix things through free on line repair manuals. The founders believe everyone has the right to repair and maintain products they own. Right now they have an excellent selection of manuals and on-line answers for computers and electronics and the areas of home repair, appliances and vehicles are slowly expanding. If you have a problem with any equipment you own give this site a try for information. Go to www.ifixit.com

Well that is all for this edition of the newsletter, as always contributions are welcome and appreciated.

On a closing note I am showing a humming bird picture I captured after taking a lot of shots and experimenting with my camera settings. I am going to put this image up for suggestions for improving it at the next SIG meeting as well as showing another movie type image I made, so I hope to see you all then.

