



## The Joys of Internet

Posted by [Michael Potts](#)

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[Michael Potts](#)

[The Joys of Internet](#)

April 16, 2015 07:14PM

**Moderator**

Registered: 11 years ago

Posts: 21

Some of you may have noticed a short (three days?) outage on this forum in mid-April, 2015. It's another little insight into the fragility of this thing that we usually take so for granted: the internet.

Here's what happened: our host, the owners of the computers that house all the ones and zeroes that comprise our programs and data, performed a broad system upgrade. In their somewhat broken English, they advised us that they were swapping out an old computer, and upgrading the foundational software that makes websites possible to the latest and greatest security systems. Our website inhabits a big computer somewhere on the Pacific Rim, we think in the Los Angeles area, in generally happy proximity to any number of other websites. Our host rents space to us and to others, and performs all the quotidian chores that we would probably forget, like daily back-ups, that ensure a stable system 24/7/365. (If it was up to us, this three day outage would have been just another interruption in an irregular series, but our beloved hosts have managed to keep us up 99.9+% of the time for years.)

On the way to and through the upgrade, one of our forum's wheels fell off, and nobody could find it. Finally, our least qualified, if most elderly, geek -- that would be me -- tried the oldest trick in the book, commonly called RTFM by fellow geeks. I followed a couple of clues embedded in the software, did what it suggested, and, Surprise! The problem seems to have gone away.

My point -- after all this verbiage, there's got to be a point -- is that we take the 'Net too much for granted. Not only does this thing run on computers (and we all know that means trouble) but it runs on LOTS of computers, linked up in a daisy chain administered by, guess what? more computers. That the damn thing works at all is a miracle! Most of the time, when something gets its digital underwear in a bunch, it gets itself straightened out in a few minutes, a few hours, rarely as long as a day. And that's the first half of my point: BE PATIENT when it doesn't work. Don't thrash (push a bunch of keys, try reinstalling things, tear your hair, cast asparagus at the system managers). Take a break ... or, as our peerless leader, Michael Phillips suggested, "chew on a willow twig and try again tomorrow." The second half of my point is, treasure and foster resilience in all things. Be grateful for the fragile and ephemeral (like the internet) but don't set your heart on it always working. Here on the Mendocino Coast, where your websters live, a logging truck ran over a junction box and plowed up half a mile of fiber last June, and the whole coast, some 10,000 folks, lost all their cell phones, internet, and a bunch of other electronic amenities we have come to rely on TOO MUCH. In February, we lost our electricity for several days. We have reason to believe that interruptions like this will become MORE common rather than less ... and yet we persist in making ourselves more dependent. One of the threads that binds us apple growers and other adherents of the earth-based life is our insistence on living independently, under our own power. Some of you may know I wrote a book about that, *The Independent Home*, that spoke to more than the need for our housing to run under its own power. Even as your high-priest of the internet, I urge you: guard your autonomy! Use all these latest bells, whistles, smartphones, and all the shiny, lovely, seductive appurtenances of modernity with a tasty salting of caution. Rather than grumbling when they don't work, give thanks when they do.

One last little thing: it costs money to operate this system, to keep it running and fix it when it breaks. It shouldn't be only the aforementioned peerless leader that supports it. He does it out of love for the discipline of growing ... something we all share.

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[Michael Phillips](#)

[Re: The Joys of Internet](#)

April 16, 2015 08:19PM

**Moderator**

Registered: 11 years ago

Posts: 621

One other joy to point out here. It appears that if you posted in the immediate days prior to this shutdown, since April 6, those contributions are gone. Today anyway ... maybe they will be back tomorrow. One good thread that comes to mind was entitled "Nourse Farms and Neonics" about the use of harmful neonicotinoids by this berry nursery. Hmmm.

All I know is there's nothing like pruning on a perfect day to keep the Internet at bay!

[Lost Nation Orchard](#)

Zone 4b in New Hampshire

Edited 1 time(s). Last edit at 04/16/2015 08:25PM by Michael Phillips.

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[Nick Segner](#)


[Re: The Joys of Internet](#)

April 18, 2015 03:37AM

Registered: 9 years ago

Posts: 49

Michael -

I share your sentiments. I'm glad, however, to see this forum back up and running as it's a great resource for fledgling orchardists, such as myself, as we struggle to deal with other kinds of bugs! 

Wildcat Valley Farm  
Zone 8b  
Olympic Peninsula Rainshadow  
Port Angeles, Washington

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[Paul Weir](#)

[Re: The Joys of Internet](#)

April 22, 2015 12:13AM

Nice job sticking to it Michael Potts and seeing it back online. Good man!

Registered: 11 years ago

Posts: 187

[Gopher Hill Apples](#)

Zone 8 in California

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[Paul Weir](#)

[Re: The Joys of Internet](#)

April 22, 2015 12:15AM

The thread Michael points out "Nourse Farms and Neonics" was indeed a good one.

Registered: 11 years ago

Posts: 187

I sent an email to my POC at Spooner Farms in Washington to inquire on their procedure and to see if they were worthy of a recommendation to the HON. This reminds me that they never wrote me back. I will call them to inquire again.

[Gopher Hill Apples](#)

Zone 8 in California

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