



ANNETTE LEIN staff photographer

Jerry Taylor instructs Lee Strauss how to use Photo Story 3 at the Greece Historical Society. Taylor runs the company Senior Tech to help seniors learn to use computers. Strauss is a trustee for the society from Greece.

Parma retiree specializes in teaching seniors

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GREECE — Lee Strauss knows what she wants her computer to do, but doesn't always know how to make it do what she wants.

That's where Jerry Taylor comes in.

Taylor, of Parma, is a retired Greece Central School District technology integration teacher. Even before he left the district in 2006, he knew what his next step would be: starting a small business giving senior citizens one-on-one, in-home computer training.

His one-man operation, Senior Tech, gives seniors such as Strauss the tools they need to get what they want from their computing experience.

"I teach everything from soup to nuts," said Taylor. "There's a whole target population of seniors who don't know what to do, and classes and books aren't the answer."

Taylor said computer classes often move too fast and don't help people who have a different computer at home than the one they use in the classroom.

Much of his teaching is about "overcoming the fear. There's the fear 'will I break it?' or 'will I lose



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Taylor and Strauss watch a slide show she created. She is beyond the basics, but Taylor instructs people at all levels who need one-on-one attention.

it?' I tell people the best thing about their computer is that it has an off button and if it's bothering you, just turn it off."

Another problem seniors sometimes face is non-helpful "help" from well-meaning family members who think they're teaching Grandpa or Grandpa computer skills, but really aren't.

"Nieces, nephews, grandson, granddaughter, they think showing is teaching," he said. "They'll come over and go 'click, click, click' and think they've taught Grandpa to do something. But if it takes all day, I'm not going to grab the mouse. My students are the drivers,

I'm just a passenger, and the learning has to be hands-on."

Some of the things his students most like to learn about: how to deal with e-mail attachments, basics like cutting and pasting, how to reply to e-mails, how to delete e-mails, and which update requests from computer programs to accept and which to ignore. He also teaches more advanced skills such as photo and video editing.

Strauss, 73, a trustee with the Greece Historical Society, is a longtime student of Taylor's. Her computer skills are far beyond basic e-mail and word processing. With Taylor's

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Taylor charges \$35 per hour for his in-home computer lessons, or \$90 for a three-hour block of lessons. He will travel within a 25-mile radius of Rochester. For more information about Senior Tech, call (585) 964-3319 or go to www.seniortech.us.

help, she's learned how to scan, edit and store photographs, publish informational pamphlets for the society, become adept at using her computer for research and has been working on a computerized inventory of historical society artifacts. On a recent afternoon, Taylor taught her to create a one-minute slide show, set to music, of historic pictures of the Erie Canal.

"Obviously, I'm overjoyed," she said. "I'm proud of my accomplishments. With lessons, I'm able to do what I want to do and am much less frustrated." □

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