Plugins

Plugins are like apps on a computer or cell phone. They work on top of Wordpress, utilizing Wordpress for functions, but adding specialty features and capabilities. Most of the plugins are free that we have used. When logged in to Wordpress, the plugins are found in the left sidebar of the dashboard screen. Many of them have their own menus in the sidebar; some add to the menu bar at the top of the screen, and others are accessed through the sidebar Settings menu item.

Plugins can be activated, deactivated, or deleted from the Plugins item found in the sidebar. Deactivated plugins remain installed, but are not working in order to save site loading time. They can still be updated and notifications of their updates are sent out even though they are deactivated.

When plugin updates are available, a notification is found as an icon of the Wordpress sidebar menu. Update them after clicking on Plugins and going to the plugins page. Please update only one plugin at a time, waiting for it to successfully update before updating the next one. I have read that batch updating all at once in a single update can cause some conflicts.

BackWPup
This is a backup plugin that backs up the entire site every month after revisions are made. The Pro version was paid for, the other version is the free version. The Pro version backs up the site to our Sharepoint automatically, and the backup files are stored there. Until that was used, the backups were triggered manually using the free version, and the files were stored in the Bluehost server. You can access the plugin from the icon in the top menu of the Wordpress dashboard screen, or the sidebar menu item BackWPup Pro.

Avada Builder / Avada Core
These are essential pieces of the Avada theme in order to use the Avada editing systems. When newer versions are available for update, a notification appears. Usually, there is a specific order that they must be updated in, and that order is specified in the update notice. There are no settings or preferences in order to use them - they work and integrate with Avada.

Contact Form 7
This is what is used to create the forms on the site. It can be found in the dashboard sidebar. It creates a form using fields to fill in, and creates a link to the form that must be added to a Wordpress page. Once placed on a page and someone fills it in, the data is automatically sent to you or someone else in an email. The plugin settings set up where the data is sent to and set up a format for that email.

This is a very popular Wordpress form that has many plugins available to work with it. **Contact Form CFD87** plugin adds functionality by saving the data entered in the form into a database. From there, it can be exported to a CVS file or spreadsheet. Access the databases and the plugin from the Wordpress dashboard sidebar item called Contact Forms.

There is a Paypal plugin that works within it and is integrated into Contact Form 7. **Contact Form 7 Paypal & Stripe Add-on** will let you add Paypal directly into a form you set up. Access it through a Contact Form 7 page in the additional tab that is added at the top of the Contact Form 7 editing window. There are several Paypal plugins that work differently and perform different tasks associated with online payments. Select the most appropriate one for the functions and features you want to perform when paying with Paypal.

Accept Paypal Payments using Contact Form 7 is another Paypal payment plugin that works with Contact Form 7.

Quick Paypal Payments is a simple Paypal plugin that works on any Wordpress page - it does not need to be inserted into a Contact Form 7 form. Access its settings from the Worpress dashboard sidebar menu Payments.

Accept Donations with Paypal plugin is a simple plugin that can be added again to any Wordpress page.

Login Lockdown
This is a security feature plugin. It locks someone out from logging in after a certain number of repeated failed attempts. It prevents someone from continually trying a lot of passwords to break into the site. Access the settings from the Wordpress dashboard sidebar in Settings > Login Locdown.

WP-Optimize
This plugin helps clean up the extra files, temp files, and revisions to pages that are stored in Wordpress. Access the settings in the Wordpress dashboard sidebar. Every few months or more, open the plugin and manual clean up and optimize some of the databases, data, and tables. Other revisions to pages which are archived, are automatically deleted after 3 weeks. Doing so helps make the site run a little faster and more efficiently.

Email Subscribers
This is an extensive plugin that is used to develop and send out the monthly notification reminders to subscribers. It creases a self-subscribe and unsubscribe email system for readers to sign up and take themselves off. It creates a Widget for signups that we placed on the Home page, and is set to require an email verification of every new online signup. It allows us to create a template or newsletter, and then sends it out to the email subscriber list. We create a new template or newsletter every month to use as a notification. Emails are sent out using as a chron job, whereby a handful of emails are periodically sent so as to not overwhelm the hosting server or receivers' ISPs into thinking we are sending spam.

Access this plugin in the Wordpress dashboard sidebar under Email Subscribers. Update the subscriber list every month. Resend any notices to subscribers who did not confirm their email address. After a second attempt in the following month with no confirmation, delete these unconfirmed signups. Be sure to delete the unsubscribers every month, too.

Facebook Feed / Instagram Feed
These two plugins are used to place the feeds from our social media onto the Home page. Settings are found for each in the Wordpress dashboard sidebar.

Woo Commerce
This is a very popular online sales plugin for online stores. It was used for the FCMGA merchandise we sold to our members. There are several plugins that relate to the basic Woo Commerce store app and add features and enhancement to it. The plugins are deactivated when our online store is not being used. Access all the settings and plugin enhancements from the Wordpress dashboard sidebar.

Statcounter Plugin
This links our site to the statistics that are kept for this particular site statistics app. The app is not very useful without paying a subscription since the free version installed provides a limited look at only the most recent visits. It does, however, give an overall historical view of visitors to the site. Access the actual data on a separate web site. Access our settings from the Wordpress dashboard sidebar under Settings > Statcounter.

Extendify
This adds some graphics to use on pages when they are set up. It was installed a while ago, but is not used any longer.

Jetpack
This is a Swiss army knife plugin capable of a lot of different functions. Access settings from the Wordpress dashboard sidebar. I use it for viewing some better statistics on our site visitors. There are a lot of additional features Jetpack offers that have not yet been explored.

Redux
You will never access this and use it directly. It is used by some of the plugins to generate their interface screens on their settings pages.

Wordpress Dashboard
There is a box titled Site Health Data on the login dashboard screen. It gives a quick look checkup of the technical parts running the site. It should be reviewed periodically and maintenance performed to keep the site running in top form.